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3. GEORGIA
4. OHIO STATE

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BEHIND THE SHOOT

"All those guys had a lot of fun. They mainly heckled each other but kept remarking about how great they looked. Then they made fun of each other when the key light didn't fire: They said, 'We're so big, we blocked the sun!'" — Paul Abell, photographer



BIG AL

DAMIEN HARRIS



BEHIND THE SHOOT

"Damien Harris was very calm and collected; he wouldn't say anything other than 'Yes sir.' Very polite. He had fun with Big Al, but he would not make crazy faces. 'Not my style!'"

— Paul Abell, photographer

DAVID SILLS

WILL GRIER





BEHIND THE SHOOT

"During the shoot, I asked David to look at me while he was catching. For that reason, he missed quite a few of the passes Will was throwing to him."

— Fred Vuich, photographer

QUESTION

Who is your favorite college football player ever?

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EDITORIAL

Mitchell Light
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Marcus Wilson: Quarterback at Vanderbilt when I was in school in the '90s. He was masterful on the option pitch!

Robert T. Doster III
SENIOR EDITOR

Showing my age here, but Earl Campbell is still my all-time favorite player, college or pro. The ultimate power-speed combo. His Heisman year at Texas made me a fan for life.

John Gworek
SENIOR EDITOR

Je'Mone Smith, WR, IUP, 1990-93

Steven Lassan
SENIOR EDITOR

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SENIOR DESIGNER

Derek Barnett & Peyton Manning ... Can you tell I grew up a Tennessee fan?

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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Megan Imwalle
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Troy Smith from Ohio State. When I was first learning how the game worked, he was a player my dad showed me.

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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Cole Doster
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Only one answer: Peyton Manning

John Glennon
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Tim Couch: When you're a Kentucky grad the pickings are slim

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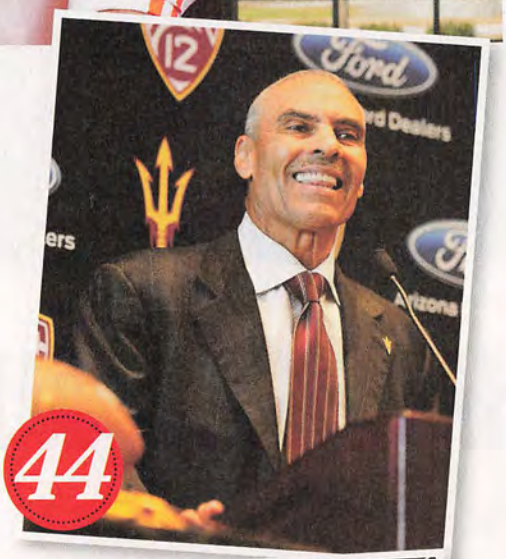
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TEAM INDEX

This is an alphabetical listing with page locations for all 130 FBS team previews. Starting on page 64, the previews are organized according to conference.







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ATHLON SPORTS PRESEASON 130 FBS RANKINGS

1. Alabama
2. Clemson
3. Georgia
4. Ohio State
5. Michigan
6. Miami
7. Auburn
8. Washington
9. Wisconsin
10. Oklahoma
11. Penn State
12. Michigan State
13. Florida State
14. Mississippi State
15. Notre Dame
16. Virginia Tech
17. Florida
18. Stanford
19. Boise State
20. Texas
21. USC
22. West Virginia
23. Oregon
24. TCU
25. Texas A&M
26. LSU
27. South Carolina
28. Utah
29. FAU
30. Missouri
31. UCF
32. Arizona
33. NC State
34. Oklahoma State
35. Iowa
36. Iowa State
37. Wake Forest
38. Memphis
39. Boston College
40. Louisville
41. Kansas State
42. Georgia Tech
43. Pitt
44. San Diego State
45. Purdue
46. Northwestern
47. Navy
48. Fresno State
49. California
50. UCLA
51. Maryland
52. Houston
53. Baylor
54. Texas Tech
55. Kentucky
56. Tennessee
57. Army
58. Ole Miss
59. Arkansas
60. Temple
61. USF
62. Nebraska
63. Indiana
64. Washington State
65. Duke
66. Syracuse
67. Colorado
68. Arizona State
69. North Carolina
70. Vanderbilt
71. Ohio
72. Arkansas State
73. Minnesota
74. Northern Illinois
75. Marshall
76. Troy
77. Appalachian State
78. North Texas
79. Louisiana Tech
80. Toledo
81. Virginia
82. Utah State
83. Wyoming
84. UAB
85. MTSU
86. BYU
87. Rutgers
88. Miami (Ohio)
89. Buffalo
90. Tulane
91. SMU
92. Southern Miss
93. Western Michigan
94. Akron
95. Illinois
96. Cincinnati
97. Colorado State
98. ULM
99. Nevada
100. UNLV
101. Air Force
102. Oregon State
103. Old Dominion
104. UTSA
105. Central Michigan
106. Eastern Michigan
107. UMass
108. Tulsa
109. FIU
110. Louisiana
111. WKU
112. South Alabama
113. Georgia State
114. New Mexico State
115. Georgia Southern
116. Kansas
117. UConn
118. New Mexico
119. Bowling Green
120. Ball State
121. Hawaii
122. East Carolina
123. Coastal Carolina
124. Liberty







125. San Jose State
126. Texas State
127. Charlotte
128. Rice
129. Kent State
130. UTEP

Alabama, Clemson: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Georgia: Paul Abell

CONFERENCE PREDICTIONS

Records are projections for the 2018 season, overall and conference, through the regular season and conference championship games

ACC

ATLANTIC

1. Clemson (12-1, 7-1)
2. Florida State (9-3, 6-2)
3. NC State (8-4, 4-4)
4. Wake Forest (7-5, 4-4)
5. Boston College (6-6, 3-5)
6. Louisville (6-6, 3-5)
7. Syracuse (6-6, 3-5)

COASTAL

1. Miami (10-3, 6-2)
2. Virginia Tech (9-3, 5-3)
3. Georgia Tech (7-5, 4-4)
4. Pitt (6-6, 4-4)
5. Duke (6-6, 4-4)
6. North Carolina (4-8, 2-6)
7. Virginia (4-8, 1-7)

ACC CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Clemson over Miami

AMERICAN ATHLETIC

EAST

1. UCF (10-3, 7-1)
2. Temple (7-5, 5-3)
3. USF (8-4, 5-3)
4. Cincinnati (4-8, 3-5)
5. UConn (3-9, 1-7)
6. East Carolina (2-10, 1-7)

WEST

1. Memphis (9-4, 6-2)
2. Navy (9-4, 5-3)
3. Houston (7-5, 5-3)
4. Tulane (6-6, 4-4)
5. SMU (6-6, 4-4)
6. Tulsa (4-8, 2-6)

AAC CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

UCF over Memphis

BIG 12

1. Oklahoma (11-2, 7-2)
2. Texas (9-4, 6-3)
3. West Virginia (8-4, 6-3)
4. TCU (8-4, 6-3)
5. Oklahoma State (8-4, 5-4)
6. Iowa State (7-5, 5-4)
7. Kansas State (6-6, 4-5)
8. Baylor (6-6, 3-6)
9. Texas Tech (5-7, 3-6)
10. Kansas (2-10, 0-9)

BIG 12 CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Oklahoma over Texas

BIG TEN

EAST

1. Ohio State (12-1, 8-1)
2. Michigan (10-2, 7-2)
3. Penn State (9-3, 6-3)
4. Michigan State (9-3, 6-3)
5. Maryland (6-6, 4-5)
6. Indiana (6-6, 3-6)
7. Rutgers (4-8, 1-8)

WEST

1. Wisconsin (10-3, 7-2)
2. Iowa (8-4, 5-4)
3. Purdue (7-5, 5-4)
4. Northwestern (6-6, 4-5)
5. Nebraska (6-6, 3-6)
6. Minnesota (6-6, 3-6)
7. Illinois (3-9, 1-8)

BIG TEN CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Ohio State over Wisconsin

CONFERENCE USA

EAST

1. FAU (11-2, 7-1)
2. Marshall (8-4, 6-2)
3. MTSU (7-5, 6-2)
4. Old Dominion (6-6, 3-5)
5. FIU (5-7, 3-5)
6. WKU (4-8, 2-6)
7. Charlotte (2-10, 1-7)

WEST

1. North Texas (8-5, 6-2)
2. Louisiana Tech (8-4, 6-2)
3. UAB (8-4, 6-2)
4. Southern Miss (7-5, 5-3)
5. UTSA (5-7, 4-4)
6. Rice (2-11, 1-7)
7. UTEP (1-11, 0-8)

C-USA CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

FAU over North Texas

INDEPENDENTS

1. Notre Dame (9-3)
2. Army (8-4)
3. BYU (5-7)
4. UMass (5-7)
5. New Mexico State (5-7)
6. Liberty (3-9)

MAC

EAST

1. Ohio (10-3, 6-2)
2. Miami (6-6, 5-3)
3. Buffalo (7-5, 5-3)
4. Akron (5-7, 4-4)
5. Bowling Green (3-9, 2-6)
6. Kent State (1-11, 0-8)

WEST

1. Northern Illinois (7-6, 7-1)
2. Toledo (8-4, 6-2)
3. Western Michigan (6-6, 4-4)
4. Central Michigan (5-7, 4-4)
5. Eastern Michigan (4-8, 3-5)
6. Ball State (3-9, 2-6)

MAC CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Ohio over Northern Illinois

MOUNTAIN WEST

MOUNTAIN

1. Boise State (11-2, 7-1)
2. Utah State (8-4, 5-3)
3. Wyoming (7-5, 5-3)
4. Colorado State (6-6, 5-3)
5. Air Force (5-7, 4-4)
6. New Mexico (3-9, 1-7)

WEST

1. San Diego State (8-5, 6-2)
2. Fresno State (8-4, 6-2)
3. UNLV (6-6, 4-4)
4. Nevada (5-7, 4-4)
5. Hawaii (3-10, 1-7)
6. San Jose State (1-11, 0-8)

MW CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Boise State over San Diego State

PAC-12

NORTH

1. Washington (11-2, 8-1)
2. Stanford (8-4, 6-3)
3. Oregon (8-4, 5-4)
4. California (7-5, 4-5)
5. Washington State (6-6, 3-6)
6. Oregon State (2-10, 0-9)

SOUTH

1. USC (9-4, 7-2)
2. Utah (8-4, 5-4)
3. Arizona (8-4, 5-4)
4. UCLA (6-6, 4-5)
5. Colorado (6-6, 4-5)
6. Arizona State (5-7, 3-6)

PAC-12 CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Washington over USC

SEC

EAST

1. Georgia (12-1, 8-0)
2. Florida (8-4, 5-3)
3. South Carolina (7-5, 4-4)
4. Missouri (7-5, 3-5)
5. Kentucky (6-6, 3-5)
6. Tennessee (5-7, 2-6)
7. Vanderbilt (4-8, 1-7)

WEST

1. Alabama (13-0, 8-0)
2. Auburn (10-2, 6-2)
3. Mississippi State (9-3, 5-3)
4. Texas A&M (8-4, 5-3)
5. LSU (7-5, 4-4)
6. Ole Miss (5-7, 1-7)
7. Arkansas (5-7, 1-7)

SEC CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Alabama over Georgia

SUN BELT

EAST

1. Troy (8-5, 6-2)
2. Appalachian State (8-4, 5-3)
3. Georgia State (5-7, 4-4)
4. Georgia Southern (4-8, 3-5)
5. Coastal Carolina (3-9, 2-6)

WEST

1. Arkansas State (9-4, 6-2)
2. ULM (6-6, 5-3)
3. Louisiana (6-6, 4-4)
4. South Alabama (5-7, 4-4)
5. Texas State (3-9, 1-7)

SUN BELT CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Arkansas State over Troy

ATHLON AWARDS

They're the teams within the team — those cohesive little units bound together by their shared responsibilities within the larger team context. For the 18th year, Athlon recognizes the best of the best at each position.

QB

1 TOP QUARTERBACK UNITS

1 ALABAMA

Tua Tagovailoa was the hero of last year's national championship victory over Georgia and is poised to unseat Jalen Hurts as the team's starter. Tagovailoa — a former five-star recruit in the 2017 signing class — played sparingly as Hurts' backup last season before throwing for 166 yards and three touchdowns in the second half (plus overtime) against the Bulldogs. With a big-time arm and lethal accuracy, Tagovailoa can develop into the best quarterback of Nick Saban's tenure at Alabama.



TUA TAGOVAILOA

2. CLEMSON Despite leading Clemson to the CFB Playoff and averaging 247.6 total yards per game last season, Kelly Bryant has a tenuous hold on the top of the depth chart. The spring arrival of five-star freshman Trevor Lawrence, along with the continued development of sophomore Hunter Johnson, has added intrigue to one of the top national championship contenders. Bryant's ability to make plays on the ground isn't in question, but coach Dabo Swinney is looking for more consistency in the passing game and big plays downfield. Lawrence made a strong impression in the spring and could supplant Bryant in fall camp.

3. WEST VIRGINIA Will Grier sat out 2016 after transferring from Florida, but the North Carolina native showed no rust in his return to action. Despite missing two games due to a finger injury, Grier finished fourth in the Big 12 in passing yards (3,490) and tossed 34 TDs. He completed 64.4 percent of his passes and ranked fourth nationally by completing 12 passes of 50 yards or more. Grier is at the controls of one of the nation's top offenses and is an *Athlon Sports* preseason first-team All-American. Miami (Fla.) transfer Jack Allison is slated to serve as the backup.

4. PENN STATE Trace McSorley will close out his career as one of the most accomplished quarterbacks in Penn State history. He's 22–5 as a starter over the last two seasons and set single-season school records in passing yards (3,164) and total offense (4,061) and the career mark in TDs accounted for (77). McSorley is also the only quarterback in Penn State history to have multiple 3,000-yard passing seasons. With running back Saquon Barkley departing for the NFL, the Nittany Lions will lean on McSorley more than ever in 2018. Tommy Stevens is the backup but will also play in an all-purpose running back/receiver role on offense.

5. ARIZONA Few quarterbacks can match the dynamic playmaking ability of Arizona's Khalil Tate. After starting 2017 as the backup, Tate took over as the starter for the final eight games. During that span, he averaged 299.3 total yards per contest and scored 21 times. He also recorded 15 runs of 30 yards or more and connected on 62 percent of his throws. Tate is likely to throw more under new coach Kevin Sumlin, but his production and style of play won't change much. After all, Sumlin coached a Heisman winner (Johnny Manziel) at Texas A&M.

6. UCF 7. Washington 8. Missouri
9. Auburn 10. Mississippi State 11. Georgia
12. Oregon 13. Michigan State 14. NC State
15. South Carolina 16. Virginia Tech
17. Florida State 18. Miami (Fla.) 19. Wisconsin
20. Syracuse 21. Notre Dame
22. Iowa 23. Ohio State
24. North Texas 25. Boise State

Tagovailoa, Harris: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Taylor: Tom Lynn

RB

TOP RUNNING BACK UNITS



1 ALABAMA

DAMIEN HARRIS

A statement that will surprise no one: Alabama (again) has the deepest backfield in college football. Damien Harris passed on the NFL for one more year in Tuscaloosa, and the senior is set to lead the backfield after rushing for 1,000 yards and 11 scores last season. Najee Harris impressed in limited action (370 yards on 61 carries) and is set for a larger role on offense after Bo Scarbrough left for the NFL. Brian Robinson and Josh Jacobs are both capable of being the top ball carrier at almost every other program.



JONATHAN TAYLOR

2. WISCONSIN Jonathan Taylor delivered one of the best statistical seasons by a freshman running back in FBS history last season. The New Jersey native set a new freshman record by rushing for 1,977 yards and reached the end zone 13 times. With Wisconsin's run-first approach and the nation's No. 1 offensive line clearing the way, Taylor's sophomore campaign could be even better than his prolific debut. Bradrick Shaw returns after rushing for 365 yards last year, with Chris James and Taiwan Deal also in the mix as key reserves.

3. STANFORD After 2,118 rushing yards and a runner-up finish in Heisman Trophy voting, Bryce Love seemed destined to head to the NFL. Instead, Love decided to return to The Farm for his senior campaign. Big plays fueled Love's run at the Heisman, as he averaged 8.1 yards per carry and set a new FBS record with 13 rushes of 50 or more yards. Love rushed for at least 100 yards in 12 out of the 13 games he played. Cameron Scarlett (389 yards in 2017) and Trevor Speights (142) have performed well in limited work.

4. OHIO STATE Ohio State's rushing attack led the Big Ten with an average of 243.2 yards per game and could be an even bigger part of the offense after the departure of quarterback J.T. Barrett. J.K. Dobbins was one of college football's top freshmen in 2017, rushing for 1,403 yards and finishing first in the Big Ten by averaging 7.2 yards per carry. Mike Weber led the team with 1,096 yards in 2016 but was slowed by a hamstring injury last year. Despite the injury, Weber still managed 626 yards and 10 touchdowns. True freshman Master Teague will be in the mix for carries as well.

5. GEORGIA The Bulldogs must replace 1,000-yard rushers Nick Chubb and Sony Michel, but as usual the ground game isn't going to miss a beat in Athens. D'Andre Swift flashed potential in a limited role last year, rushing for 618 yards and three touchdowns on just 81 carries. He's set to take over the No. 1 role but will have support from juniors Elijah Holyfield (293 yards in 2017) and Brian Herrien (265). Additionally, Georgia's No. 1 recruiting class will deliver two more impact backs. Zamir White was regarded as the top running back prospect in the 2018 class, while James Cook — the brother of former Florida State star Dalvin Cook — was a four-star recruit.

6. Florida State 7. Oklahoma
8. Washington 9. Boston College
10. FAU 11. Oklahoma State
12. Iowa State 13. Clemson
14. Miami (Fla.) 15. Michigan
16. Mississippi State 17. Missouri
18. Utah 19. Florida
20. Kentucky 21. Notre Dame
22. USC 23. Memphis
24. Michigan State 25. Maryland

TOP RECEIVER UNITS

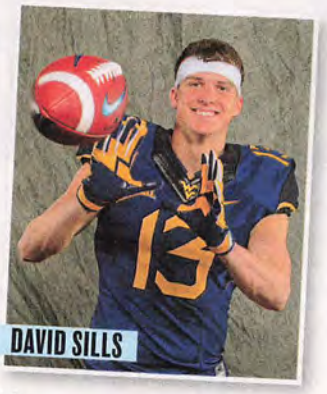
1 OLE MISS

WR/TE

Ole Miss is banned from postseason play again, but the Rebels won't lack for entertainment value in 2018. The Rebels averaged 35.8 points with quarterback Jordan Ta'amu at the controls over the final five games of last season and will carry that wide-open philosophy into this year. A.J. Brown is arguably college football's best receiver after catching 75 passes for 1,252 yards and 11 scores in 2017. He's joined by DaMarkus Lodge (41 catches for 698 yards) and D.K. Metcalf (39 catches for 646 yards) on the outside. Tight end Dawson Knox is due for more opportunities after catching 24 passes last year.



2. WEST VIRGINIA The Mountaineers lose one 1,000-yard receiver (Ka'Raun White), but WVU doesn't lack options. David Sills led all Power 5 receivers with 18 TD catches last year and is an *Athlon Sports* first-team All-American for 2018. Fellow senior Gary Jennings is back after catching 97 passes for 1,096 yards, while Marcus Simms is set to deliver more big plays after averaging 18.9 yards per catch in 2017. Alabama transfer T.J. Simmons is another weapon, with Miami (Fla.) transfer Jovani Haskins providing a breakout option at tight end.



3. OKLAHOMA Easing the Sooners' transition at quarterback is a deep set of playmakers on the outside. Marquise Brown adapted quickly from the junior college level, catching 57 passes for 1,095 yards and seven scores. CeeDee Lamb recorded 46 catches as a freshman last fall and will be even more involved in 2018. Mykel Jones also impressed (19.4 yards a catch) in limited time, while freshmen Charleston Rambo and Jaquayln Crawford are set to join the mix at receiver. Grant Calcaterra is a capable replacement for Mark Andrews at tight end.

4. SOUTH CAROLINA Will Muschamp is hoping more tempo and responsibility in the hands of QB Jake Bentley will spark an offense that averaged only 24.2 points per game last season. The return of receiver Deebo Samuel will also help. An injury limited Samuel to just three games last year, but he caught 59 passes for 783 yards as a sophomore in 2016. Bryan Edwards returns after catching 64 passes in 2017, with Shi Smith (29) and OrTre Smith (30) rounding out the top four options. A replacement must be found for tight end Hayden Hurst.

5. ALABAMA Calvin Ridley, Cam Sims and Robert Foster are gone, but as usual in Tuscaloosa, the next wave of stars is ready to emerge. Sophomores DeVonta Smith, Henry Ruggs and Jerry Jeudy each flashed potential as secondary targets last season, combining for 33 catches for 649 yards and 11 touchdowns. Freshmen Tyrell Shavers, Chadarius Townsend and Jaylen Waddle will contribute at receiver, with Irv Smith, Hale Hentges and Miller Forristall headlining a deep group of tight ends.

6. NC State 7. Clemson 8. Toledo
9. Ohio State 10. Missouri 11. Baylor
12. Miami (Fla.) 13. Arizona State 14. Louisville
15. Wisconsin 16. Oklahoma State
17. Michigan State 18. California 19. Georgia
20. Auburn 21. Penn State 22. Michigan
23. Nebraska 24. Fresno State 25. USC

Sills: Fred Buich; Brown: Joshua McCoy/Ole Miss Athletics; Benzschawel: Tom Lynn; Williams: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Thomas: Paul Abell



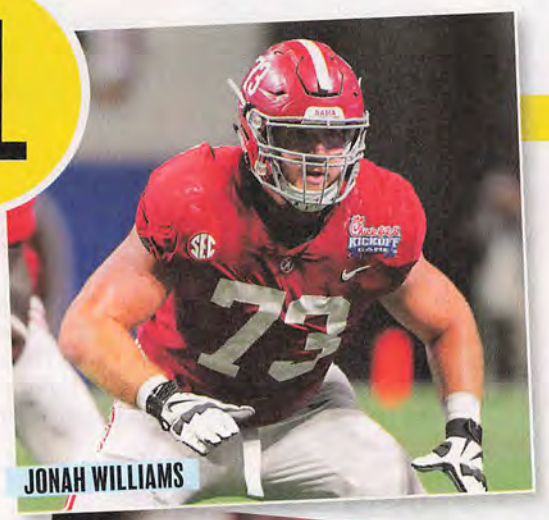
BEAU BENZSCHAWEL

TOP OFFENSIVE LINE UNITS

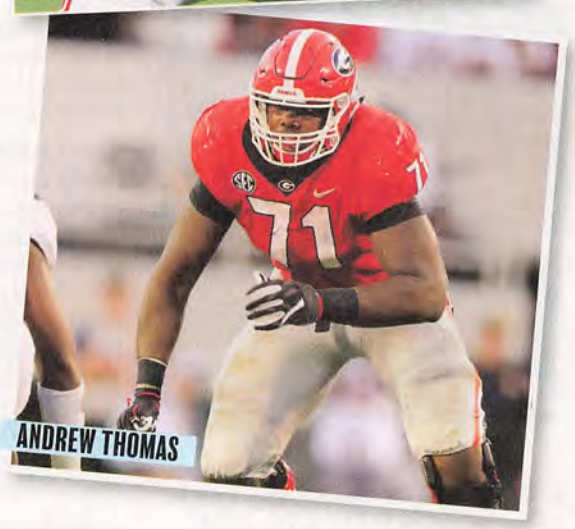
OL

1 WISCONSIN

All five starters from a dominant 2017 line return for coach Paul Chryst this season. But thanks to the development of left tackle Cole Van Lanen, the Badgers are likely to shuffle their lineup to find the right mix. That's a scary development for the rest of the Big Ten, as the line allowed only 21 sacks last fall and paved the way for rushers to average 4.96 yards per carry. After spending last year at left tackle, Michael Deiter slides back to guard and is joined by Beau Benzschawel on the other side. Right tackle David Edwards protects the blind side of quarterback Alex Hornibrook, while Tyler Biadasz returns at center after starting all 14 games last season.



JONAH WILLIAMS



ANDREW THOMAS

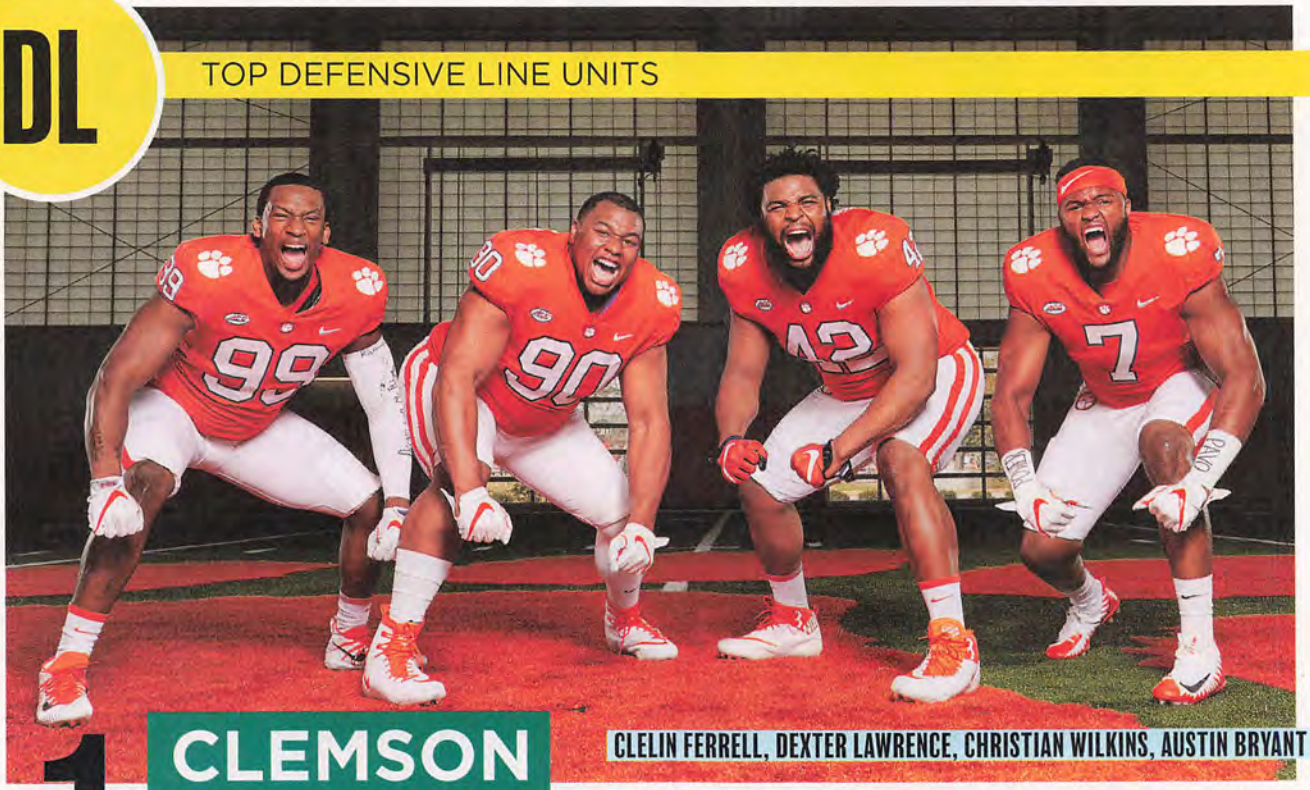
2. ALABAMA Alabama's starting five may not be decided until the end of fall camp. Regardless of which players start, this unit isn't short on talent. Left tackle Jonah Williams and center Ross Pierschbacher anchor this group and are both first-team *Athlon Sports* All-Americans for 2018. Lester Cotton and Joshua Casher are penciled in at guard, with Matt Womack fighting to hold off Jedrick Wills at right tackle. Alex Leatherwood's development could force this unit to adjust prior to the opener.

3. GEORGIA The improvement of Georgia's offensive line was a big reason why the Bulldogs won the SEC and nearly won the program's first national title since 1980. This unit gave up only 22 sacks and cleared the way for rushers to average 5.8 yards per carry. Four starters are back for 2018, including All-America candidate Andrew Thomas, who is slated to flip from right to left tackle to replace Isaiah Wynn. Center Lamont Gaillard returns after starting all 15 games last year, while Kendall Baker and Ben Cleveland are penciled in at guard. Former five-star recruit Isaiah Wilson takes over at right tackle.

4. STANFORD Stanford's powerful offensive line led the way for Bryce Love's Heisman campaign last season. With four starters back, this unit could be even better than last year's group that allowed only 17 sacks. Guard Nate Herbig is an *Athlon Sports* All-American, and center Jesse Burkett has started all 27 games over the last two years. Seniors Brandon Fanaika (guard) and A.T. Hall (tackle) man the right side. Sophomore Walker Little has the most upside of any player on this group and takes over as the full-time left tackle after starting six games last fall.

5. WASHINGTON The absence of Trey Adams was clearly felt by Washington's offense in the second half of last season. After the dominant left tackle suffered a season-ending injury against Arizona State, the Huskies allowed nine sacks over the final four games. Adams is expected to make a full recovery for 2018, and his return bolsters a line set to return three other starters, including standout right tackle Kaleb McGary. Nick Harris slides from guard to center to replace Coleman Shelton, while Luke Wattenberg and Jesse Sosebee man the guard positions.

6. Missouri 7. Boston College 8. Mississippi State
9. Ole Miss 10. Kansas State 11. Oklahoma
12. Clemson 13. Ohio State 14. Notre Dame
15. Penn State 16. West Virginia 17. NC State
18. LSU 19. USC 20. Michigan State
21. Texas Tech 22. Oregon 23. Memphis
24. San Diego State 25. Boise State



1 CLEMSON

CLELIN FERRELL, DEXTER LAWRENCE, CHRISTIAN WILKINS, AUSTIN BRYANT

Clemson seems to have an annual place near the top of college football's best defensive line rankings, but the 2018 unit might be the best of them all. Tackle Christian Wilkins and ends Austin Bryant and Clelin Ferrell passed on the NFL for one more season in Death Valley. As if that wasn't enough talent, coach Dabo Swinney has junior tackle Dexter Lawrence primed for a big season after battling injuries last year. Depth will be provided from five-star freshmen Xavier Thomas and KJ Henry, while Richard Yeargin returns after missing 2017 due to injury.



NICK BOSA

2. OHIO STATE The Buckeyes have to replace ends Sam Hubbard, Jalyn Holmes and Tyquan Lewis and tackle Tracy Sprinkle, but line coach Larry Johnson is molding the next wave of stars, ensuring Ohio State won't miss a beat in the trenches. Nick Bosa wasn't a full-time starter last season but is primed for a monster year after recording 16 tackles for a loss and 8.5 sacks in 2017. He's joined by fellow rising star Chase Young off the edge, with Jonathon Cooper and Jashon Cornell providing depth. Dre'Mont Jones is the top performer on the interior, but Robert Landers, Haskell Garrett and Davon Hamilton are solid contributors.

3. MICHIGAN Michigan returned only one starter on defense last year yet still limited opponents to 4.5 yards per play, tied for first nationally in tackles for a loss (114) and held opposing rushing attacks to 3.5 yards per carry. This unit could be even more dominant in 2018. Maurice Hurst departs up front, but the interior is set with sophomore Aubrey Solomon joining the starting lineup. On the edge, Rashan Gary and Chase Winovich form one of college football's top end combinations after contributing 14 sacks in 2017.

4. AUBURN Auburn could be deeper in the trenches despite losing standout edge rusher Jeff Holland. Two juniors — Marlon Davidson and Derrick Brown — are set to push for All-SEC honors after combining for 15.5 tackles for a loss last season. Sophomores T.D. Moultry and Big Kat Bryant flashed potential last year and will help fill the void left behind by Holland. Senior Dontavius Russell joins Brown as a starter on the interior.

5. ALABAMA Da'Ron Payne will be missed, but Alabama's defensive line won't stray too far from its standard of dominance. End Raekwon Davis returns to Tuscaloosa poised for a monster year after recording 10 tackles for a loss and 8.5 sacks last fall. He's joined off the edge by Isaiah Buggs, Quinnen Williams and LaBryan Ray. Buggs — a former junior college recruit — should be more comfortable in his second year in Tuscaloosa. Replacing Payne on the interior is the top priority for new line coach Craig Kuligowski. Senior Johnny Dwight will have the first opportunity to fill the big shoes left behind by Payne.

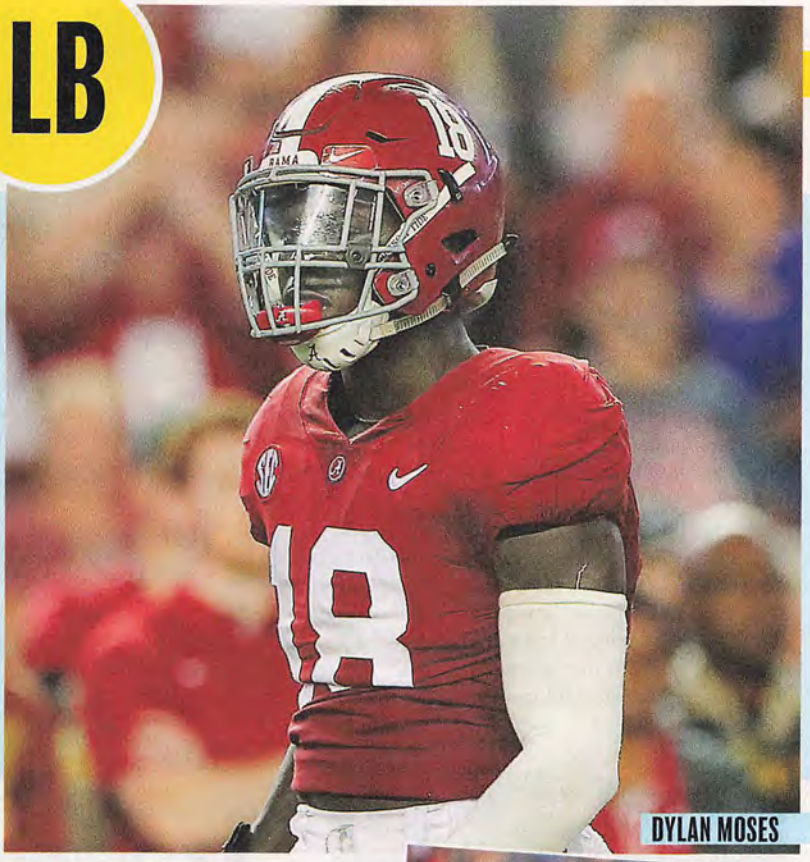
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14. Boise State 15. Houston
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20. Notre Dame 21. LSU
22. Texas A&M 23. Northwestern
24. Michigan State 25. Iowa

Clemson: Paul Abell; Bosa: Matt Hernandez; Moses: Kevin C. Cox/Getty Images; Hudson: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Smith: Peter Brouillet

LB

1 ALABAMA

Injuries took a toll on this unit last season, but Alabama seemingly had an endless supply of former top recruits ready to rise to the challenge. With better injury luck, the Crimson Tide's linebacker unit should be the best in college football for 2018. Dylan Moses and Mack Wilson will fill the void left behind by Shaun Dion Hamilton and Rashaan Evans on the inside of the 3-4 alignment. Both are breakout candidates for 2018. Terrell Lewis, Anfernee Jennings and Christian Miller battled injuries last season, but, if healthy, they form a dynamic and athletic trio of pass rushers for coach Nick Saban.


DYLAN MOSES

2. MICHIGAN Khaleke Hudson and Devin Bush delivered breakout performances for Michigan's defense in their first year as starters. Hudson — a converted safety — recorded 82 tackles (18 for a loss), eight sacks, nine pass breakups and two forced fumbles en route to earning second-team All-Big Ten honors in 2017. At 5'11" and 222 pounds, Bush packs a punch as a prototypical middle linebacker. In his first full year as a starter, Bush recorded 102 tackles (9.5 for a loss), five sacks and one interception. Josh Ross is slated to replace Mike McCray as the team's third starter at linebacker.


KHALEKE HUDSON

3. MIAMI (FLA.) Shaquille Quarterman, Michael Pinckney and Zach McCloud have manned the linebacker spots for Miami's defense in each of the last two seasons. After going through a learning curve as freshmen, this trio blossomed into one of the nation's best groups last year, helping the Hurricanes hold opponents to 3.5 yards per carry. Quarterman is the best of the group and should challenge for All-America honors. Depth behind this group could be an issue, so it's vital for Miami's defense that all three stay healthy in 2018.

4. WISCONSIN With just three returning starters, the Badgers have significant needs to address in order to match last year's dominant defense. The linebacker unit was one of those groups hit by departures, as starters Garret Dooley and Leon Jacobs exhausted their eligibility. However, a quick rebuild at this spot is in order for coordinator Jim Leonhard. Inside linebackers T.J. Edwards, Ryan Connelly and Chris Orr return after anchoring one of college football's top run defenses. On the edge, Andrew Van Ginkel (10 TFLs last year) and Zack Baun (missed 2017 due to injury) are set to assume full-time jobs.


CAMERON SMITH

5. USC Linebacker is the unquestioned strength of USC's defense this season. Cameron Smith is one of the Pac-12's top defenders and has led the Trojans in tackles for two years in a row. John Houston joins Smith as a starter on the interior of USC's base 3-4 scheme. Houston recorded 84 tackles in 13 games during a productive 2017 season. Porter Gustin played in only four games due to injury last year, but his return to full strength bolsters a pass rush that recorded 84 tackles for a loss and 46 sacks in 2017. Jordan Iosefa starts opposite Gustin on the outside.

6. Auburn 7. Michigan State
8. Notre Dame 9. Clemson
10. Texas A&M 11. Texas
12. Duke 13. Oregon
14. Washington 15. Northwestern
16. Georgia 17. LSU
18. Stanford 19. Iowa State
20. Oklahoma 21. Texas Tech
22. Arizona 23. Kentucky
24. Arkansas 25. FAU

DB TOP DEFENSIVE BACK UNITS

1 WASHINGTON

A secondary stocked with standout coverage options at cornerback, along with playmakers and speed to cover up mistakes at safety, is a must in the offensive-minded Pac-12. The Huskies certainly have that formula and then some. Cornerback Byron Murphy was poised for a breakout year until he was sidelined for seven games due to injury. If he can stay healthy, Murphy can be an All-America corner this fall. Jordan Miller, Austin Joyner and Myles Bryant are proven starters at cornerback, with Elijah Molden and Julius Irvin providing depth. *Athlon Sports* first-team All-American Taylor Rapp and senior JoJo McIntosh are set at the safety spots.



BYRON MURPHY



LAVERT HILL

2 MICHIGAN

Finding open receivers against Michigan's secondary was nearly impossible last season. The Wolverines limited passers to a 48.8 completion percentage, allowed just 11 passing scores and surrendered only four plays of 40 yards or more. This unit is likely to be even better in 2018. Cornerbacks David Long and Lavert Hill are more comfortable in their second year as starters. Tyree Kinnel and Josh Metellus had their share of ups and downs in their first season as the primary safeties but will be pushed by Utah transfer Casey Hughes and sophomores J'Marick Woods and Jaylen Kelly-Powell for snaps.

3. FLORIDA Playing cornerback as a true freshman in the SEC isn't easy. However, Marco Wilson and CJ Henderson played beyond their years last season, providing a strong foundation for the immediate future. Wilson was the better option in coverage, breaking up 10 passes and recording 34 stops over 11 contests. Henderson picked off four passes and returned two for touchdowns. Chauncey Gardner-Johnson will slide to the nickel spot after playing at safety the last two years. Brad Stewart and Jeawon Taylor anchor the safety positions.

4. CLEMSON The Tigers return two starters from a secondary that helped Clemson rank fifth nationally in pass efficiency defense last season. Cornerback Trayvon Mullen is just starting to scratch the surface of his potential after earning honorable mention All-ACC honors. Mark Fields battled injuries for most of 2017 but is back at full strength to join Mullen at cornerback. Sophomore A.J. Terrell and true freshman Kyler McMichael are expected to work as the backup corners. Juniors Tanner Muse and K'Von Wallace enter fall camp penciled into the safety spots. Sophomore Isaiah Simmons recorded 45 tackles last year and is expected to battle for snaps.

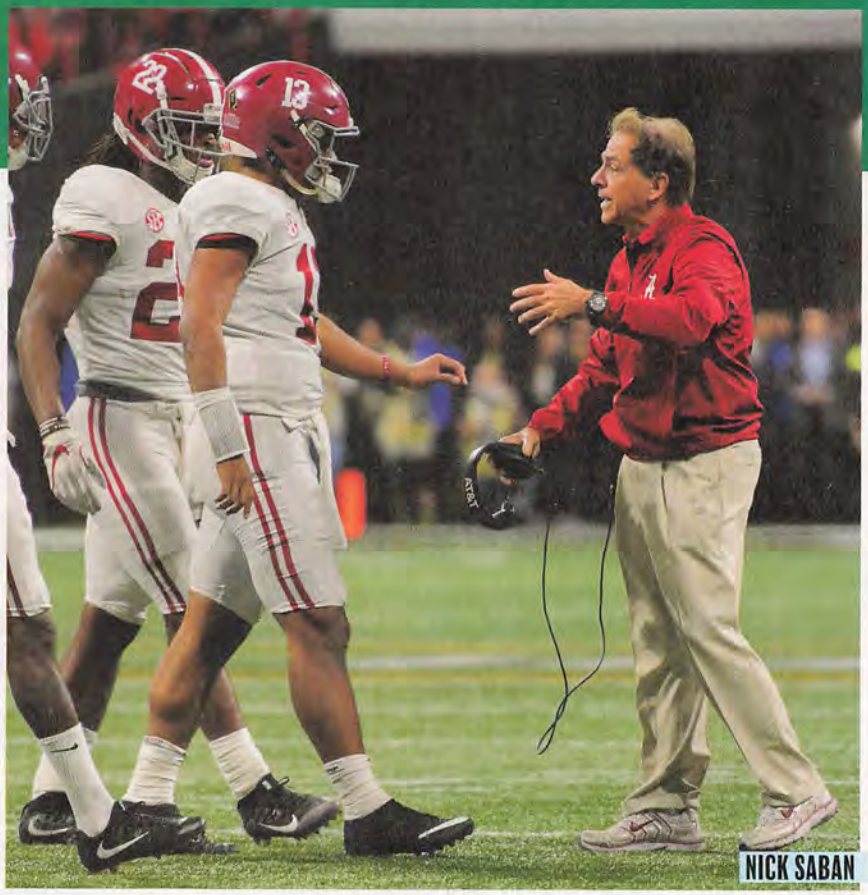
5. OHIO STATE It's an annual tradition in Columbus for the Buckeyes to lose standout defensive backs only to have the next wave of stars ready to step up. Cornerback Denzel Ward and safety Damon Webb depart after guiding the secondary to a No. 13 finish in pass efficiency defense in 2017. Damon Arnette and Kendall Sheffield are an experienced pair of corners likely to split time at one spot, with rising star Jeffrey Okudah manning the other side. Jordan Fuller collected 70 tackles and two interceptions in a breakout season at safety last fall. He's joined by Isaiah Pryor at safety.

6. Georgia 7. Florida State 8. LSU 9. Texas 10. Boise State
11. Michigan State 12. Utah 13. Auburn 14. Miami (Fla.)
15. Penn State 16. Notre Dame 17. USC 18. FAU 19. UCLA
20. Virginia Tech 21. Boston College 22. Virginia
23. Washington State 24. Alabama 25. Fresno State

Hill, Saban: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Murphy: Rich Graessle/AP

TOP COACHING STAFFS

Determining the best coaching staffs in college football is no easy task. After all, no stats are awarded to assistant coaches, and a variety of factors go into why a specific position group succeeds or struggles. In an effort to determine which staffs are the best, *Athlon Sports* weighed the value of each team's head coach and coordinators on both sides of the ball, along with some of the program's key assistants. Additionally, each staff's record of player development, its recruiting ability and overall team success were factored into our ranking.


NICK SABAN

1 ALABAMA

Nick Saban isn't finished adding to his trophy case, but the 66-year-old coach has already established a résumé that might be the best in college football history. Since taking over at Alabama in 2007, Saban is 132–20 overall and has claimed five national championships. The staff around Saban consistently changes, but the program continues to win at a high level. Alabama has new co-coordinators on both sides of the ball, as Mike Locksley and Josh Gattis replace Brian Daboll on offense, and Pete Golding and Tosh Lupoi handle the defensive responsibilities. Dan Enos, the new quarterbacks coach, and Craig Kuligowski, hired away from Miami (Fla.) to coach the defensive line, were two tremendous offseason additions to the staff.

2. OHIO STATE Ohio State's Urban Meyer isn't far behind Nick Saban on the list of top head coaches. He's recorded 177 victories over four FBS jobs and claimed three national championships, including the 2014 title with the Buckeyes. Meyer is supported by a standout staff that includes former head coaches Kevin Wilson (offense) and Greg Schiano (defense) serving in co-coordinator roles. Ryan Day joins Wilson as a co-coordinator on offense, with rising star Alex Grinch joining Schiano on defense. Defensive line coach Larry Johnson is one of college football's top assistants.

3. CLEMSON Dabo Swinney has elevated Clemson into an annual national contender. After taking over as the program's interim coach in 2008, Swinney has led the Tigers to 101 wins, the 2016 national championship and seven straight seasons of double-digit victories. Defensive coordinator Brent Venables has been instrumental in Clemson's rise to the top. He's arguably the best defensive play caller in college football and consistently develops elite linemen. Tony Elliott and Jeff Scott ensured that the offense wouldn't miss a beat after Chad Morris departed Death Valley following the 2014 season.

4. WASHINGTON Considering the high level of success Chris Petersen maintained at Boise State, it was only a matter of time before he transformed Washington into one of the Pac-12's top programs. After a 15–12 start, Petersen guided the Huskies to a CFB Playoff berth in 2016 and a 22–5 mark over the last two years. Much of Petersen's staff followed him from Boise to Seattle, including the defensive pairing of Jimmy Lake and Pete Kwiatkowski. After a year on the Atlanta Falcons' staff, Bush Hamdan returns to Seattle as the team's offensive play caller.

5. MICHIGAN High expectations greeted Jim Harbaugh upon his return to Ann Arbor. While Michigan has yet to record a trip to the playoff or win the Big Ten East, the Wolverines have made noticeable improvement and are 28–11 over the last three years. The offense is one area in which Harbaugh is still looking for the right mix, but a retooled staff should help provide a spark in 2018. Former Florida head coach Jim McElwain is tasked with developing the receivers, and standout offensive line coach Ed Warinner takes over in the trenches. The other side of the ball is set with Don Brown back to call the plays on defense.

6. Georgia 7. Auburn 8. Virginia Tech 9. TCU 10. Michigan State
11. Penn State 12. Oklahoma State 13. Texas A&M 14. Oklahoma
15. Texas 16. Wisconsin 17. Miami (Fla.) 18. Utah 19. Florida State
20. Notre Dame 21. Florida 22. Iowa 23. Mississippi State
24. Stanford 25. Duke

ATHLON SPORTS ALL-AMERICA TEAM

FIRST TEAM OFFENSE

QUARTERBACK
Will Grier
6-2, 215, Sr., West Virginia

RUNNING BACK
Bryce Love
5-10, 196, Sr., Stanford

RUNNING BACK
Jonathan Taylor
5-11, 216, So., Wisconsin

ALL-PURPOSE
Myles Gaskin
5-10, 191, Sr., Washington

WIDE RECEIVER
A.J. Brown
6-1, 225, Jr., Ole Miss

WIDE RECEIVER
David Sills
6-4, 204, Sr., West Virginia


Bryce Love


Jonathan Taylor

TIGHT END
Noah Fant
6-5, 241, Jr., Iowa

CENTER
Ross Pierschbacher
6-4, 301, Sr., Alabama

OFFENSIVE LINEMAN
David Edwards
6-7, 319, Jr., Wisconsin

OFFENSIVE LINEMAN
Mitch Hyatt
6-5, 305, Sr., Clemson

OFFENSIVE LINEMAN
Dalton Risner
6-5, 300, Sr., Kansas State

OFFENSIVE LINEMAN
Jonah Williams
6-5, 301, Jr., Alabama


Dalton Risner

Taylor: Tom Lynn; Love: Peter Brouillet; Risner: Tim Umphrey; Wilkins: Paul Abell


Christian Wilkins

FIRST TEAM DEFENSE

DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

Nick Bosa

6-4, 263, Jr., Ohio State

DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

Clelin Ferrell

6-5, 260, Jr., Clemson

DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

Ed Oliver

6-3, 290, Jr., Houston

DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

Christian Wilkins

6-4, 300, Sr., Clemson

LINEBACKER

Troy Dye

6-4, 221, Jr., Oregon

LINEBACKER

Cameron Smith

6-2, 250, Sr., USC

LINEBACKER

Devin White

6-1, 240, Jr., LSU

CORNERBACK

Byron Murphy

5-11, 184, So., Washington

CORNERBACK

Greedy Williams

6-2, 182, So., LSU

SAFETY

Jaquan Johnson

5-11, 190, Sr., Miami (Fla.)

SAFETY

Taylor Rapp

6-0, 207, Jr., Washington

FIRST TEAM SPECIALISTS

KICKER

Matt Gay

6-0, 228, Sr., Utah

PUNTER

Mitch Wishnowsky

6-2, 220, Sr., Utah

KICK RETURNER

Tony Pollard

5-11, 200, Jr., Memphis

PUNT RETURNER

KaVontae Turpin

5-9, 153, Sr., TCU

ATHLON SPORTS

ALL-AMERICA TEAM


D'Andre Swift

SECOND TEAM

OFFENSE

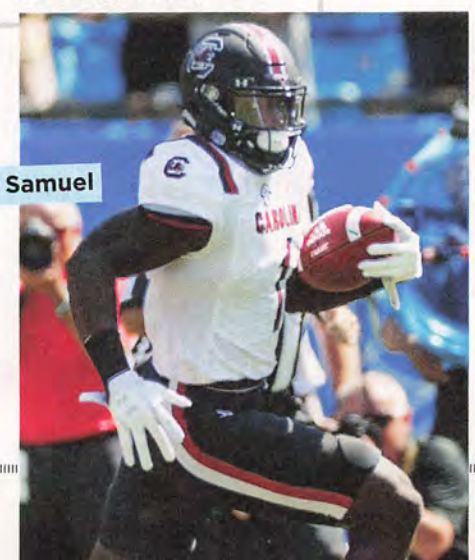
QB	Tua Tagovailoa	6-1	218	So.	Alabama
RB	AJ Dillon	6-0	245	So.	Boston College
RB	Devin Singletary	5-9	200	Jr.	FAU
AP	D'Andre Swift	5-9	215	So.	Georgia
WR	N'Keal Harry	6-4	213	Jr.	Arizona State
WR	Deebo Samuel	6-0	210	Sr.	South Carolina
TE	Albert Okwuegbunam	6-5	260	So.	Missouri
C	Toa Lobendahn	6-3	290	Sr.	USC
OL	Trey Adams	6-8	327	Sr.	Washington
OL	Beau Benzschawel	6-6	322	Sr.	Wisconsin
OL	Nate Herbig	6-4	348	Jr.	Stanford
OL	Greg Little	6-6	325	Jr.	Ole Miss


Toa Lobendahn


Jeffery Simmons

DEFENSE

DL	Rashan Gary	6-5	281	Jr.	Michigan
DL	Jeffery Simmons	6-4	300	Jr.	Mississippi State
DL	Sutton Smith	6-1	225	Jr.	Northern Illinois
DL	Chase Winovich	6-3	253	Sr.	Michigan
LB	Devin Bush	5-11	222	Jr.	Michigan
LB	T.J. Edwards	6-1	248	Sr.	Wisconsin
LB	Joe Giles-Harris	6-2	240	Jr.	Duke
CB	Deandre Baker	5-11	185	Sr.	Georgia
CB	Mark Gilbert	6-1	175	Jr.	Duke
S	D'Cota Dixon	5-10	200	Sr.	Wisconsin
S	Andrew Wingard	6-0	210	Sr.	Wyoming

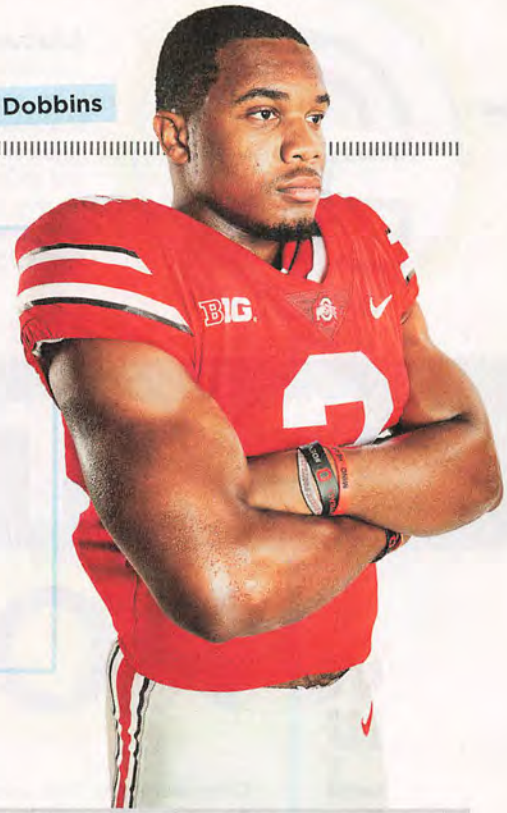

Deebo Samuel

SPECIALISTS

K	Dominik Eberle	6-2	190	Jr.	Utah State
P	Jake Bailey	6-2	188	Sr.	Stanford
KR	Deebo Samuel	6-0	210	Sr.	South Carolina
PR	Mecole Hardman	5-11	183	Jr.	Georgia

Swift, Blankenship: Paul Abell; , Bachie: Tom Lynn; Simmons, Samuel: Tom DiPace; Davis: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Dobbins, Ohio State Athletics; Lobendahn: Peter Brouillet

THIRD TEAM


J.K. Dobbins

OFFENSE

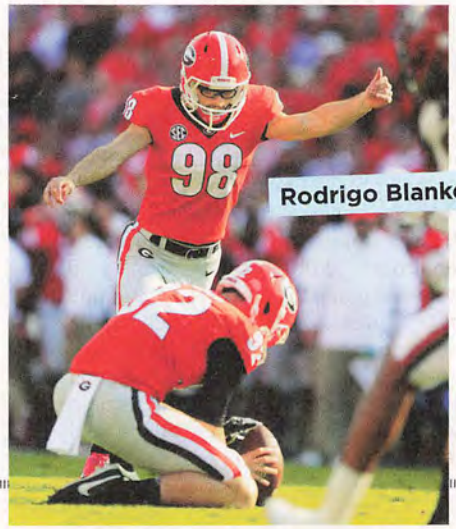
QB	Khalil Tate	6-2	215	Jr.	Arizona
RB	J.K. Dobbins	5-10	212	So.	Ohio State
RB	Damien Harris	5-11	213	Sr.	Alabama
AP	Justice Hill	5-10	190	Jr.	Oklahoma State
WR	Penny Hart	5-8	180	Jr.	Georgia State
WR	Anthony Johnson	6-2	207	Sr.	Buffalo
TE	Kaden Smith	6-5	253	So.	Stanford
C	Jake Hanson	6-5	298	Jr.	Oregon
OL	Michael Deiter	6-6	321	Sr.	Wisconsin
OL	Bobby Evans	6-5	299	Jr.	Oklahoma
OL	Trey Smith	6-6	320	So.	Tennessee
OL	Andrew Thomas	6-5	320	So.	Georgia


Raekwon Davis

DEFENSE

DL	Raekwon Davis	6-7	308	Jr.	Alabama
DL	Dexter Lawrence	6-4	340	Jr.	Clemson
DL	Montez Sweat	6-6	245	Sr.	Mississippi State
DL	Ricky Walker	6-2	304	Sr.	Virginia Tech
LB	Joe Bachie	6-2	230	Jr.	Michigan State
LB	Khaleke Hudson	6-0	205	Jr.	Michigan
LB	Shaq Quarterman	6-1	240	Jr.	Miami
CB	Julian Love	5-11	189	Jr.	Notre Dame
CB	Brian Peavy	5-9	190	Sr.	Iowa State
S	Lukas Denis	5-11	185	Sr.	Boston College
S	Jordan Fuller	6-2	204	Jr.	Ohio State


Joe Bachie


Rodrigo Blankenship

SPECIALISTS

K	Rodrigo Blankenship	6-1	191	Jr.	Georgia
P	Corliss Waitman	6-2	205	Sr.	South Alabama
KR	Marcus Jones	5-9	170	So.	Troy
PR	Avery Williams	5-9	193	So.	Boise State

Alabama Jalen Hurts' résumé is sparkling: A 26–2 record as the starter, including two appearances in the National Championship Game. That, however, doesn't guarantee anything, and it's likely that he will relinquish the job to sophomore **Tua Tagovailoa**. The hero of Alabama's comeback win over Georgia in the title game, Tagovailoa is one of the most physically gifted quarterbacks in the nation. The Hawaii native showcased his arm strength and accuracy by connecting on 63.6 percent of his throws for 636 yards and 11 scores in a reserve role last fall. Tagovailoa's ability to stretch the field and open up the passing game is too valuable to have on the sidelines.
Projected Winner: Tagovailoa





EXTRA POINTS

QB BATTLES

Clemson In his first season as the starter, **Kelly Bryant** threw for 2,802 yards and 13 touchdowns and finished third on the team with 665 rushing yards and 11 scores. Bryant's average of 247.6 total yards per game ranked seventh in the ACC, but Clemson's passing attack took a step back from the Deshaun Watson-led 2016 offense. Sophomore Hunter Johnson and Trevor Lawrence, the No. 1 overall recruit in the 2018 signing class, will challenge Bryant for snaps. Bryant is the best runner out of the trio, but Lawrence and Johnson are better passers. Lawrence, who enrolled in the spring, has the most all-around upside of the three.
Projected Winner: Bryant



Florida Fixing an anemic offense that averaged only 22.1 points per game last season is the top priority for new coach Dan Mullen. There is talent at the skill positions, and the offensive line is in relatively good shape, but the quarterback position features significant question marks. **Feleipe Franks** completed just 54.6 percent of his throws as a redshirt freshman last fall. However, he's getting a second chance under the new coaching staff and responded well in the spring. Kyle Trask and Jake Allen are also in the mix, but true freshman Emory Jones is the long-term answer at this position. Jones ranked as one of the top dual-threat QBs in the 2018 class and participated in the spring.
Projected Winner: Franks

Florida State Deondre Francois was poised to claim a spot among the ACC's top quarterbacks in 2017, but a season-ending knee injury against Alabama in the opener derailed Florida State's offense. True freshman James Blackman assumed the starting job and threw for 2,230 yards and 19 TDs. Francois was limited in the spring, and that allowed Blackman and redshirt freshman Bailey Hockman to get an early edge in new coach Willie Taggart's offense. After a full year to work as the starter and an offseason to add bulk, Blackman likely has a slight advantage over Francois.
Projected Winner: Blackman

Georgia Jake Fromm was pressed into duty as a true freshman when Jacob Eason suffered a knee injury early in the opener against Appalachian State. The former five-star recruit was never overwhelmed by the moment, guiding Georgia to an SEC title and an appearance in the National Championship Game. Fromm also ranked among the SEC's top quarterbacks, throwing for 2,615 yards and 24 scores in 15 appearances. However, he's far from secure as the No. 1. Justin Fields, also a five-star recruit, is the only other scholarship quarterback on the roster and brings a dual-threat element to the offense. He's too talented to not see action at some point.
Projected Winner: Fromm

LSU The task of fixing LSU's passing attack falls to new coordinator Steve Ensminger, who is likely to use more three- and four-receiver looks to spread the field. But in order for that plan to work, Ensminger and coach Ed Orgeron have to find a QB. Myles Brennan connected on 14-of-24 attempts for 182 yards in limited duty as a true freshman in 2017 and is the frontrunner over redshirt freshman Lowell Narcisse and junior Justin McMillan. Narcisse and McMillan are better runners, and Ensminger could create a package to get them on the field.
Projected Winner: Brennan

Franks: Tom DiPace; Tagovailoa, Bryant: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Wimbush: Tom Lynn; Ehlinger: Chris Covatta

Michigan Jim Harbaugh's fourth spring practice in Ann Arbor concluded with uncertainty at quarterback. That's largely due to the pending appeal of Ole Miss transfer Shea Patterson for immediate eligibility. If eligible, Patterson is the unquestioned starter. The former five-star recruit started 10 games in his tenure with the Rebels and threw for 3,139 yards and 23 touchdowns. If Patterson isn't eligible, Michigan can turn to third-year sophomore Brandon Peters, redshirt freshman Dylan McCaffrey or true freshman Joe Milton. Peters showed some potential in six appearances last year but completed only 52.8 percent of his throws. McCaffrey was a four-star recruit in the 2017 signing class.
Projected Winner: Patterson

Nebraska It's likely to be only a matter of time before new Nebraska coach Scott Frost transforms the Cornhuskers into one of the Big Ten's top offenses. He heads into his 2018 debut in Lincoln with three players locked in a tight competition for the No. 1 spot. Tanner Lee departed early for the NFL and Patrick O'Brien transferred, leaving redshirt freshman Tristan Gebbia, true freshman Adrian Martinez and walk-on Andrew Bunch to compete for the starting job. Gebbia was recruited by the previous staff to run a pro-style attack, but he does have some mobility. After missing his senior year of high school due to injury, Martinez enrolled in time to compete in spring practice. The California native's dual-threat ability is the best fit for Frost's offense, but he might not be ready to play just yet.
Projected Winner: Gebbia



Notre Dame Most fans expected **Brandon Wimbush** to have a breakout season, but that didn't happen, and coach Brian Kelly opened the quarterback competition during the offseason. Ian Book closed out last season on a high note by throwing for 164 yards and two scores in the bowl win against LSU. He's firmly in the mix, with true freshman Phil Jurkovec also expected to get an extended look in the fall. Regardless of who starts, Kelly is looking for more from a passing attack that averaged only 178.9 yards per game in 2017.
Projected Winner: Wimbush

Ohio State Even though the J.T. Barrett-led Ohio State offense had its share of inconsistencies over the last few seasons, the Buckeyes are still going to miss Barrett's all-around play and leadership. But as always in Columbus, the cupboard is hardly bare for coach Urban Meyer. Sophomore Dwayne Haskins impressed in limited action last year, throwing for 565 yards and four scores, including a clutch performance in the second half to hold off Michigan after an injury to Barrett. Haskins isn't as mobile as Barrett but brings more to the offense as a passer. Joe Burrow has also played well in limited snaps and worked as Barrett's top backup in 2016. Former top recruit Tate Martell is also in the mix after a redshirt year. Burrow could leave as a graduate transfer if he does not win the job.
Projected Winner: Haskins

Tennessee Tennessee's offense averaged only 14.1 points in SEC games due in large part to poor quarterback play. New coach Jeremy Pruitt and coordinator Tyson Helton added Stanford graduate transfer Keller Chryst to compete with sophomores Jarrett Guarantano and Will McBride. Guarantano was underwhelming as a redshirt freshman. Chryst, a former four-star recruit, threw for 962 yards and eight TDs in seven games with the Cardinal last year. He is a better fit for the new offense in Knoxville.
Projected Winner: Chryst



Texas Texas enters the 2018 season with its best outlook at quarterback since Colt McCoy departed Austin following the 2009 season. Shane Buechele and **Sam Ehlinger** have both had their moments as starters and combined for 3,320 passing yards and 18 TDs last season. Buechele has started 19 games over the last two seasons, while Ehlinger emerged as the team's best QB as a true freshman last year. Both are likely to see time, but Ehlinger's mobility and playmaking should give him an edge.
Projected Winner: Ehlinger

UCLA There will be some growing pains, but Chip Kelly has intriguing options at QB in his first year back in the Pac-12. Sophomore Devon Modster played in five games (two starts) last fall, throwing for 671 yards and four scores. He rushed for only 34 yards in the entire season but showed his mobility in high school (almost 700 yards rushing as a junior). Freshman Dorian Thompson-Robinson, considered to be an ideal fit for Kelly's offense, and Michigan transfer Wilton Speight are set to join the competition in the summer.
Projected Winner: Modster

USC Coach Clay Helton doesn't lack for options to replace Sam Darnold, but there's little in the way of experience. Sophomore Matt Fink might have an edge since he's the only QB on the roster who has taken a snap, but redshirt freshman Jack Sears and true freshman JT Daniels both will have a chance to win the job. Daniels ranked as one of the top quarterback recruits in the 2018 signing class and enrolled at USC in time for spring practice.
Projected Winner: Daniels

OTHERS TO WATCH
and projected starters

Arkansas: Cole Kelley
California: Ross Bowers
Kansas State: Skylar Thompson
Memphis: David Moore
Miami: Malik Rosier
Oklahoma State: Dru Brown
Purdue: David Blough
Texas A&M: Nick Starkel
Texas Tech: McLane Carter
USF: Chris Oladokun
Washington State: Gardner Minshew



1. SEC

The SEC is facing some stiff competition — mainly from the Big Ten — for its spot as the No. 1 conference in the nation. We all know that Alabama, Georgia and Auburn are in great shape for the immediate future; for the league to maintain its elite status going forward, programs such as LSU, Florida, Tennessee and Texas A&M must reach their potential in the next few years. In 2018, Georgia looks like the overwhelming pick in the East, though don't be surprised if Florida — rejuvenated under first-year coach Dan Mullen — or South Carolina mounts a legitimate challenge. In the West, it's Alabama and Auburn followed by Mississippi State. *Favorite: Alabama*

2. Big Ten The Big Ten East has replaced the SEC West as the most challenging division in college football. Over the last three seasons, the East has placed seven teams (Ohio State three times, Penn State twice, Michigan and Michigan State once) in the final AP top 10; in the same span, five SEC West teams (Alabama three times, Auburn and Ole Miss once) finished in the top 10. Wisconsin retains its spot as the top team in the West, but Nebraska — with Scott Frost running the show — will emerge as an annual contender in the very near future. Iowa, as usual, will be solid, and both Purdue and Minnesota are on the uptick with bright young coaches. *Favorite: Ohio State*

3. ACC Clemson will be a consensus pick to win the ACC in 2018. But this league features quality depth. Miami and Virginia Tech are both trending up under their respective third-year coaches, and Florida State will no doubt bounce back quickly from its uncharacteristic mediocre season now that Willie Taggart is in charge. The key question for the ACC: Can the middle part of the league (teams such as Louisville, NC State, Georgia Tech, etc.) emerge as top-25 caliber teams as opposed to top-40-ish teams? *Favorite: Clemson*

4. Big 12 The Big 12 might lack a true national championship contender in 2018, but no league figures to have more parity. Oklahoma is the easy pick for No. 1 again despite suffering key personnel losses. Texas gets the nod at No. 2 thanks to solid quarterback play and what should be the league's best defense. Pencil Kansas in at No. 10. Other than that, it's wide open, especially with teams 3 through 7. We settled on West Virginia, TCU, Oklahoma State, Iowa State and Kansas State as our predicted order, but you can make an argument for any of those teams to finish third. *Favorite: Oklahoma*

5. Pac-12 The Pac-12 is a bit of a mystery thanks to some extreme coaching turnover; six of the 12 teams will be under new leadership. Washington has the best coach in the league (Chris Petersen) and should have the best team. Stanford and Oregon are next in line in the North. USC is the pick in the South, though Utah poses a serious challenge. UCLA made one of the top hires of the offseason, but it might take Chip Kelly a few years to get the Bruins in position to win a championship. *Favorite: Washington*

6. AAC The AAC had one team win a New Year's Six Bowl (UCF) and two others finish the season ranked in the top 25 (South Florida and Memphis). UCF lost its coach — Scott Frost returned home to Nebraska — but should still be among the top Group of 5 teams in the country. South Florida and Temple will be worthy competitors in the East. The West is wide open; Memphis, Navy and Houston appear to be the top three. *Favorite: UCF*

7. Mountain West Fresno State's resurgence under Jeff Tedford has been a positive development, but the Mountain West still lags behind the AAC for the unofficial title as the top Group of 5 league. *Favorite: Boise State*

8. MAC The power still resides in the MAC West, where Northern Illinois and Toledo figure to fight it out for the division title. Ohio and Miami appear to be the top two teams in the East, but don't count out upstart Buffalo. *Favorite: Ohio*

9. Conference USA FAU made a huge leap in Lane Kiffin's first season, racing through the C-USA slate with an 8–0 mark and dominating North Texas in the league title game. Expect more of the same. *Favorite: FAU*

10. Sun Belt The Sun Belt will now have two five-team divisions after the departure of New Mexico State and Idaho. Tory and Appalachian State are the class of the East. Arkansas State is the pick in the West. *Favorite: Arkansas State.*

SEC:, Tagovailoa: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Taylor: Tom LynnMcSorley: Bruce Schwartzman

Heisman Trophy Contenders



1. Tua Tagovailoa, QB, Alabama
No player who has yet to start a game has received such offseason buzz as Tagovailoa — not even Tim Tebow in 2007. Alabama's dual-threat sophomore quarterback teased us with his play as reserve in garbage time throughout the 2017 regular season before starting the second half of the National Championship Game and leading Alabama to a comeback win over Georgia. If he maintains that level of play — assuming he wins the starting job, of course — the native of Hawaii will find himself in New York in December.

2. Bryce Love, RB, Stanford
There have been 30 players in Division I history to rush for at least 2,000 yards in a season. None did it more efficiently than Love, who averaged 8.1 yards per carry in his breakout junior season. His numbers could have even been gaudier had he not been slowed by an ankle injury in the latter half of the season.



3. Jonathan Taylor, RB, Wisconsin
Taylor burst onto the scene in Week 2 of his true freshman season by rushing for 223 yards in a 31–14 win over Florida Atlantic. He topped the 200-yard mark two more times and ended his first season with 1,977 yards on a 6.6-yard average. He will be the offensive star for a preseason top-10 team.

4. J.K. Dobbins, RB, Ohio State
Dobbins rushed for 1,403 yards as a true freshman despite getting more than 20 carries only one time (in Week 1). His 7.2-yard average trailed only Bryce Love and Rashaad Penny among players with at least 175 rushing attempts. Dobbins' biggest obstacle: He will face more competition for carries than most of the backs on this list.

5. Khalil Tate, QB, Arizona
Tate's numbers were obscene after taking over as the Wildcats' quarterback in Week 5. Consider the following: In his first six games, he averaged 201.2 rushing yards per game while averaging 10.0 yards per passing attempt. That's an unreal combination of rushing production and passing efficiency. Tate should thrive under new coach Kevin Sumlin.

6. Jake Fromm, QB, Georgia
Used primarily as a "game manager" early in his true freshman season, Fromm took on a larger role in the offense down the stretch. He was nearly flawless in wins over Auburn (SEC Championship Game) and Oklahoma (CFB Playoff Semifinal) and also played well in the title game loss to Alabama.

7. Will Grier, QB, West Virginia
Grier thrived under Dana Holgorsen in his first season at West Virginia, throwing for 3,490 yards with 34 touchdowns and 12 interceptions. If the Mountaineers emerge as contenders in the Big 12 — which is quite possible — he could emerge as a legitimate Heisman contender.



8. Trace McSorley, QB, Penn State
The case against McSorley: Penn State lost offensive coordinator Joe Moorhead, its top rusher (Saquon Barkley) and its top pass catcher (DaeSean Hamilton). The case for McSorley: He will need to become an even bigger part of the Nittany Lions' attack and could post the best numbers of his three years as the starter.

9. Jarrett Stidham, QB, Auburn
Stidham is poised to have a big junior season as the Tigers could skew more to the passing game thanks to the departure of Kerryon Johnson (1,391 rushing yards) and the return of their top six pass catchers.

10. Rodney Anderson, RB, Oklahoma
Slowed by injuries during his first two years at Oklahoma, Anderson averaged 134.9 rushing yards over the last eight games — highlighted by a career-high 201 against Georgia in the College Football Playoff loss.

OTHERS TO WATCH

11. Jake Browning, QB, Washington
12. Drew Lock, QB, Missouri
13. Ed Oliver, DT, Houston
14. Brian Lewerke, QB, Michigan State
15. AJ Dillon, RB, Boston College
16. Cam Akers, RB, Florida State
17. McKenzie Milton, QB, UCF
18. Justin Herbert, QB, Oregon
19. DeAndre Swift, RB, Georgia
20. Nick Fitzgerald, QB, Mississippi State

Ranking 2017's New Coaches



1. Jeff Tedford, Fresno State

Before: 1-11 (0-8) After: 10-4 (7-1)

Tedford did a masterful job in his return to the head-coaching ranks, leading his alma mater to the West Division title of the Mountain West Conference one year after the program went winless in league play. The Bulldogs recorded wins over San Diego State, Boise State and Houston, and three of their four losses came to teams ranked in the final AP Top 25 (Alabama, Washington and Boise State).

2. Lane Kiffin, FAU

Before: 3-9 (2-6) After: 11-3 (8-0)

The Kiffin era got off to a rocky start — FAU lost to Navy (by 23 points) and Buffalo in the first four weeks of the season — but the Owls dominated their Conference USA schedule and ended the year on a 10-game winning streak. FAU increased its offensive production by 100.1 yards and 14.2 points per game from 2016 to '17.

3. Lincoln Riley, Oklahoma

Before: 11-2 (9-0) After: 12-2 (8-1)

Riley was handed the keys to the Oklahoma program last summer at the age of 33 and guided the Sooners to a Big 12 title and the No. 2 seed in the College Football Playoff. The OU offense led the nation with 579.6 yards per game and 8.3 yards per play and ranked third nationally in scoring with 45.1 points per game.



4. Jeff Brohm, Purdue

Before: 3-9 (1-8)
After: 7-6 (4-5)

Brohm is known as one of the top offensive coaches in the game, but it was the Purdue defense that was the catalyst to the program's first bowl game since 2012. The Boilermakers improved their scoring margin from negative-13.7 to plus-4.7 per game thanks to a defense that allowed an average of 20.5 points (down from 38.3 in 2016). Another positive sign: Five of Purdue's six losses came by 10 points or fewer.

5. Butch Davis, FIU

Before: 4-8 (4-4) After: 8-5 (5-3)

Lane Kiffin stole the headlines at nearby FAU, but Davis engineered a nice turnaround of his own in South Florida in his return to the sidelines. The Panthers improved their win total by four games and had a winning record in league play for the first time since going 5-3 in the Sun Belt in 2011.

6. Shawn Elliott, Georgia State

Before: 3-9 (2-6) After: 7-5 (5-3)

Georgia State opened the season with two losses — at home to FCS member Tennessee State and at Penn State by 56 points. The Panthers proceeded to win seven of their final 10 games, including all five on the road, to finish with a winning record for the first time in the program's five seasons in the FBS ranks. There are, however, holes in the résumé: Georgia State did not beat a team with a winning record and won only one game by more than 10 points.

7. Willie Taggart, Oregon

Before: 4-8 (2-7) After: 7-6 (4-5)

Taggart restored order in his only season in Eugene, leading the Ducks back to a bowl game after a one-year hiatus. Things could have been even better had quarterback Justin Herbert remained healthy; Oregon went 6-1 in the regular season in his seven starts and 1-4 when he was sidelined with a fractured collarbone.

8. Geoff Collins, Temple

Before: 10-4 (7-1) After: 7-6 (4-4)

The record doesn't look overly impressive, but Collins did a nice job in his first season as a head coach. Temple lost key personnel on both sides of the ball from a team that won 10 games and captured the AAC Championship. The Owls won three of their last four to reach bowl-eligibility and capped off the season with a 28-3 win over FIU in the Gasparilla Bowl.

9. Charlie Strong, USF

Before: 11-2 (7-1) After: 10-2 (6-2)

South Florida entered 2017 as the overwhelming pick to be the top Group of 5 team in the nation. Didn't happen. The Bulls still had a fine season — winning 10 games — but failed to win the AAC East Division (losing out to rival UCF). The offense took a step back (from great to very good), averaging 1.0 yard per play fewer in 2017.

Tedford: Fresno State Athletics; Brohm: Tim Umphrey; Herman: Layne Murdoch; Sanford: Drew Fritz

Ranking 2017's New Coaches



10. Tom Herman, Texas

Before: 5-7 (3-6) After: 7-6 (5-4)

A solid first season for Herman could have been even better with a few breaks. The Longhorns lost to both USC and Oklahoma State in overtime and lost to Oklahoma and Texas Tech by a combined nine points. The biggest area of improvement was on defense; Texas allowed 365.6 yards per game in 2017, down from 448.3 in Charlie Strong's final season.

11. Matt Luke, Ole Miss

Before: 5-7 (2-6) After: 6-6 (3-5)

Luke did an outstanding job in his season as the Rebels' interim head coach, coaxing six wins out of a team that was banned from the postseason. He was named the permanent head coach three days after leading the Rebels to a 31–28 win over Mississippi State in Starkville.

12. Ed Orgeron, LSU

Before: 8-4 (5-3) After: 9-4 (6-2)

LSU's 2017 season will always be remembered for the loss at home to Troy, but the Tigers managed to win nine games and went 6–2 in the SEC, their best mark since 2012. This program continues to have issues on offense, however, and the Matt Canada experiment lasted only one season. Steve Ensminger will call the plays this year — much to the dismay of the Tiger faithful.

13. Justin Wilcox, California

Before: 5-7 (3-6) After: 5-7 (2-7)

The Golden Bears won one fewer Pac-12 game in 2017 but were arguably a better team despite losing standout quarterback Davis Webb and three starters on the offensive line. Cal dominated Washington State 37–3 in mid-October for one of its two league wins. Among its losses were a one-point setback to Arizona and three-point defeats at Stanford and UCLA.

14. Major Applewhite, Houston

Before: 9-4 (5-3) After: 7-5 (5-3)

After a two-year stint as Tom Herman's offensive coordinator, Applewhite was named head coach at arguably the most desirable Group of 5 program in the nation. The results were underwhelming. After a 4–1 start, Houston lost four of its last seven to finish 7–5. Not exactly what UH president Renu Khator had in mind when she said: "The winning is defined at the University of Houston as 10–2. We fire coaches at 8–4."

15. Tom Allen, Indiana

Before: 6-7 (4-5) After: 5-7 (2-7)

Indiana had its moments in 2017 — a surprisingly easy win at Virginia, close losses to Michigan and Michigan State — but in the end, the Hoosiers won only two league games and missed a bowl game for the first time since 2014. The defense, which began to show improvement when Allen arrived as the coordinator in 2016, took another step forward.

16. P.J. Fleck, Minnesota

Before: 9-4 (5-4) After: 5-7 (2-7)

Word of caution for those eager to call P.J. Fleck a bust after one season at Minnesota: His first team at Western Michigan went 1–11. Still, there is no denying that the Golden Gophers were a disappointment. Their two Big Ten wins came against hapless Illinois and a Nebraska team that lost six of its last seven. Minnesota did not score a point in its final eight quarters of the season.

17. Tim Lester, Western Michigan

Before: 13-1 (8-0) After: 6-6 (4-4)

Lester, a former quarterback at Western Michigan, inherited a roster that lost its two best players — quarterback Zach Terrell and All-America wide receiver Corey Davis — from the most successful team in school history. A step back was to be expected. Still, it should be a bit alarming that the Broncos' scoring margin regressed from plus-21.8 in 2016 to plus-4.9 in '17 and that the team was outgained on a per-play basis.

18. Randy Edsall, UConn

Before: 3-9 (1-7) After: 3-9 (2-6)

Edsall's first season of his second tour of duty at UConn went about as expected — the Huskies were quite a bit better on offense and quite a bit worse on defense. The result was another three-win season that featured little to get excited about.

19. Mike Sanford, Western Kentucky

Before: 11-3 (7-1) After: 6-7 (4-4)

Few teams regressed statistically as much as Western Kentucky last season. One year after outgaining their opponents by a staggering 2.5 yards per play (7.7 to 5.2), the Hilltoppers were outgained 5.5 to 5.3. They also averaged 20 points per game fewer en route to a 6–7 record.



20. Luke Fickell, Cincinnati

Before: 4-8 (1-7) After: 4-8 (2-6)

The Bearcats failed to make up much ground in the AAC East in their first season under Fickell. Cincinnati won three games against FBS opponents, by four points over Miami (Ohio) and by one point over both Tulane and UConn.

21. Matt Rhule, Baylor

Before: 7-6 (3-6) After: 1-11 (1-8)

Rhule was praised for adding stability to a Baylor program that has been making headlines for all of the wrong reasons, but the Bears' performance on the field was a big disappointment. And there was nothing fluky about the record; the Bears lost to Liberty and UTSA at home.

22. Jay Norvell, Nevada

Before: 5-7 (3-5) After: 3-9 (3-5)

Norvell's first month as a head coach resulted in an 0–5 record that included a loss at home to Idaho State. The Wolf Pack played better the rest of the season thanks to an offense that averaged 34 points over the final seven games.

23. Brent Brennan, San Jose State

Before: 4-8 (3-5) After: 2-11 (1-7)

San Jose State opened the season with a solid showing in a loss to South Florida followed by a 34–13 win over Cal Poly. The Spartans closed with a surprising 20–17 win over Wyoming. In between, it was a disaster; SJSU lost 10 straight games, only two by fewer than 20 points.

Ranking 2018's New Coaches

The coaching carousel started spinning back in July when Ole Miss fired Hugh Freeze and didn't stop until mid-January when Arizona tabbed Kevin Sumlin to replace Rich Rodriguez. In the end, 21 FBS programs will have new coaches in 2018 — or 20 if you don't count Ole Miss, which removed the interim tag from Matt Luke shortly after the season concluded. The most notable development: Three standing Power 5 coaches left for jobs at other Power 5 schools after there was no such movement in the two previous seasons. Another notable fact: Three new coaches will be at their alma maters (Luke at Ole Miss, Scott Frost at Nebraska and Jonathan Smith at Oregon State). Here is our ranking of the new coaches for the 2018 season.



1

Scott Frost, Nebraska

Previous Job: Head Coach, UCF

No school in recent memory has needed a head coach as badly as Nebraska needs Frost. The former Cornhusker quarterback arrives in Lincoln fresh off of a highly successful stint at UCF, where he guided the Knights to a 13–0 record just two years after the program failed to win a game. His teams play an exciting style as well; UCF led the nation in scoring (48.2 ppg) and ranked fifth in total offense (530.5 ypg) with a true freshman quarterback running the show. He is inheriting a Nebraska program that has not lost fewer than four games since 2003, the final season of the Frank Solich era. There are no guarantees in the world of college football, but it will be a significant surprise if Frost does not return Nebraska to national prominence.

2. Chip Kelly, UCLA

Previous Job: Head Coach, San Francisco 49ers (2016)

UCLA made a major statement about its commitment to football by spending big money to fire Jim Mora and his staff and hire Kelly, the biggest free agent on the coaching market. Kelly also was heavily courted by Florida, among others, but opted to return to the Pac-12, where he enjoyed a dominating four-year run with Oregon from 2009-12. Consider these numbers: Under Kelly's watch, the Ducks averaged 11.5 wins per season and recorded a 33–3 mark in league games. In his final three years, they ranked first, fourth and fifth in the nation in total offense and first, third and second in scoring offense. For comparison's sake, UCLA has not finished in the top 10 nationally in total offense any time in the past 10 years. That will no doubt change soon. With a fertile recruiting base and a system that players will want to play in, Kelly should have the Bruins competing for Pac-12 South titles on a regular basis in the near future.

3



Dan Mullen, Florida

Previous Job: Head Coach, Mississippi State

There are two schools of thought on Mullen. Some will wonder why a coach who has a losing record in the SEC (33–39 in nine seasons) can be so highly regarded. Others (who are correct) will note that any coach who takes Mississippi State to eight straight bowl games and has the Bulldogs ranked in the top 25 at some point in six of nine seasons is doing a fantastic job. Mullen will now have an opportunity to ply his trade at a school that has everything necessary to win a national championship. His first order of business will be to provide a spark to a Florida attack that, amazingly, has not finished higher than 10th in the SEC in total offense over the past eight seasons. In that same span, Mississippi State has finished in the top half of the SEC seven times. This is a great hire by Florida athletic director Scott Stricklin, Mullen's former boss in Starkville.

4. Jimbo Fisher, Texas A&M

Previous Job: Head Coach, Florida State

Texas A&M wanted a big name to replace Kevin Sumlin, and Fisher, who won a national title in 2013 at Florida State, most definitely fits the bill. In eight seasons in Tallahassee, the former Nick Saban assistant went 83–23 overall and 48–17 in the ACC. The Seminoles, however, have slipped a bit in recent seasons; after going 23–1 in the ACC from 2012-14, they were a rather ordinary 14–10 in league play in the past three years. Some tough injury luck and some unforeseen attrition at the quarterback position contributed to the recent struggles, but it's not a great look for a team with so much talent to finish 3–5 in the ACC (as FSU did in 2017). Still, Fisher is an outstanding coach with a proven track record who is at a school that has made a tremendous financial commitment to football since joining the SEC. A&M has everything in place — now it's time to win.

Frost: Scott Bruhn; Mullen: AP; Campbell: Scott Donaldson; Sumlin: Rebecca Sasnett/Arizona Athletics

Ranking 2018's New Coaches

5. Willie Taggart, Florida State

Previous Job: Head Coach, Oregon

Taggart, a Florida native who grew up rooting for the Seminoles, left Oregon after one season to return to his home state. His career record of 47–50 in eight seasons could be a red flag for some, but it must be noted that he has taken over a rebuild of some degree at each of his coaching stops. In fact, in his three previous jobs, Taggart inherited teams that went 0–12 (Western Kentucky), 3–9 (South Florida) and 4–8 (Oregon) in the season prior to his arrival. Highly respected defensive coordinator Jim Leavitt opted to remain at Oregon, but Taggart managed to hire two solid coordinators in Walt Bell from Maryland (offense) and Harlon Barnett from Michigan State (defense). Led by Taggart — one of the elite recruiters in the sport — this staff will have no trouble stockpiling talent in Tallahassee.

6. Joe Moorhead, Mississippi State

Previous Job: Offensive Coordinator, Penn State

Moorhead's decision to leave his job as the head coach at Fordham to become the offensive coordinator at Penn State after the 2015 season proved to be the best move of his career. The Nittany Lions' offense improved drastically in his first season, increasing its production from 348.6 yards per game in 2015 to 432.6 in '16 and its scoring from 23.2 to 37.6 per game. Those numbers took another big jump in 2017 — 460.3 yards and 41.1 points per game. And not only is Moorhead an accomplished coordinator, but he's also had success as a head coach. He went 38–13 in four seasons at Fordham from 2012-15, including three appearances in the FCS playoffs. The only knock on this hire: He's never coached in the South. It's not a huge issue, but definitely something to monitor as he wades through the recruiting waters of the SEC.

7. Chad Morris, Arkansas

Previous Job: Head Coach, SMU

You can tell a lot about Morris' reputation in the media and among fans that a coach with a 14–22 record was universally praised as an outstanding hire at an SEC school. Morris' early struggles at SMU can largely be attributed to the absolute train wreck he inherited from June Jones. In 2014, the Mustangs went 1–11 and were outscored by a staggering 30.2 points per game. Morris gradually built the program from two wins in 2015 to five wins in 2016 to seven wins last fall. And the Ponies made significant strides offensively in each season, capped off by a unit that ranked 15th nationally in 2017 with 478.5 yards per game. Morris has deep ties in Texas from 16 years as a high school coach in the state and will no doubt make that an area of emphasis in recruiting as he aims to raise the talent level in Fayetteville.

8 Kevin Sumlin, Arizona

Previous Job: Head Coach, Texas A&M

There's not a long list of coaches who have been fired from one Power 5 job and enjoyed success at another. Sumlin, however, has a chance to buck the trend. He did an outstanding job at Houston (35–17 overall, 24–8 Conference USA) and managed to have a winning record (25–23) in the SEC in his six seasons at Texas A&M. The Aggies never quite reached expectations, but they were always competitive — they won at least four SEC games in five of six seasons — and often entertaining. On the negative side, there always seemed to be a little too much drama in College Station, from the handling of Johnny Manziel to the saga surrounding five-star quarterback recruits Kyle Allen and Kyler Murray. Expectations are lower at Arizona, and there is no doubt Sumlin will recruit at a high level. This was a nice hire late in the game after the school's divorce with Rich Rodriguez.





9. Steve Campbell, South Alabama

Previous Job: Head Coach, Central Arkansas

Campbell arrives after successful stints in the FCS ranks (33–15 in four seasons at Central Arkansas), in junior college (100–30 in 12 seasons at two schools in Mississippi) and Division II (27–8 in three seasons at Delta State). In his final two seasons at Central Arkansas, the Bears went a combined 17–1 in the Southland Conference and reached the second round of the FCS playoffs twice. He has coached in the FBS ranks twice, one year as the offensive coordinator at Middle Tennessee (2002) and one year as the offensive line coach at Mississippi State (2003). South Alabama has been competitive in the Sun Belt since joining the league in 2012 but has never really been a serious threat to win the conference title. Campbell's job is to change that.

10. Mario Cristobal, Oregon

Previous Job: Offensive Coordinator, Oregon

Cristobal checked several important boxes for Oregon as it searched for a coach to replace Willie Taggart. He had experience as a head coach (six seasons at FIU); he is known as a terrific recruiter; and he had the support of the players. Those factors, combined with a rapidly approaching early signing period, led to the school's decision to remove the interim tag on Dec. 8, just three days after Florida State officially announced Taggart as its new head coach. The detractors will say that Cristobal was hired solely to salvage a top recruiting class, but he boasts a strong résumé that includes stops at Rutgers working for Greg Schiano and Alabama working for Nick Saban. He convinced highly regarded defensive coordinator Jim Leavitt to remain and tabbed Marcus Arroyo, a promising young coach at Oklahoma State, as his offensive coordinator. This seems like a high-risk/high-reward hire.

Ranking 2018's New Coaches

11 Jeremy Pruitt, Tennessee

Previous Job: Defensive Coordinator, Alabama

The long national nightmare that was the Tennessee coaching search mercifully ended in the first week of December with yet another Nick Saban assistant ascending to a head-coaching position in the SEC. Pruitt has done a tremendous job in his three stops as a defensive coordinator — 2013 Florida State (No. 3-ranked defense), 2014-15 Georgia (No. 17 and No. 7) and 2016-17 Alabama (No. 1 both seasons) — but he's had the luxury of coaching at three elite programs loaded with four- and five-star talent. He's also regarded as a top-notch recruiter, but again, he's been recruiting to Florida State, Georgia and Alabama — not exactly a tough sell. It's been a rough stretch at Tennessee, which is now two decades removed from the 1998 national championship. Pruitt will bring talent to Knoxville. The question then becomes: Will it be enough to contend with Georgia, which is finally realizing its potential under Kirby Smart, and Florida, which should be on the uptick under Dan Mullen?



12. Billy Napier, Louisiana

Previous Job: Offensive Coordinator, Arizona State

Napier fits the profile as a first-time coach in the Sun Belt. He's young (39 when the season starts); he's been well schooled (coached under Dabo Swinney and Nick Saban); and he's been a coordinator at a Power 5 school (Clemson in 2009-10 and Arizona State in 2017). A former quarterback at Furman, Napier was named the offensive coordinator at Clemson in 2009 at the age of 29 only to be fired two years later after the Tigers' offense stalled. He rehabilitated his career under Saban's watch — first as analyst in 2011 and later as a wide receivers coach from 2013-16. Last year, Arizona State improved its total offense by 40.4 yards per game in his only season at the school. He takes over a Louisiana program that is eager to return to prominence in the Sun Belt after finishing no higher than fifth in the last three seasons.

13. Sonny Dykes, SMU

Previous Job: Offensive Analyst, TCU

Dykes, a native Texan, was the obvious choice for SMU after Chad Morris made the move to Arkansas. He has seven years of experience as a head coach, with mixed results at Louisiana Tech (22–15 in three seasons) and California (19–30 in four seasons). Despite his relative struggles in Berkeley, Dykes' teams excelled on offense. Even his 2013 team, which went 0–9 in the Pac-12, averaged 453.5 yards per game and ranked sixth in the league in total offense. His ensuing three teams ranked third, second and first, respectively, in the conference in total offense — without finishing over .500 in league play in any season. Dykes' teams at SMU might not win any AAC West titles, but they will play an entertaining brand of football.

14. Jonathan Smith, Oregon State

Previous Job: Offensive Coordinator, Washington

A former walk-on and four-year starter at quarterback at Oregon State, Smith will forever be remembered for leading the Beavers to an 11–1 record in 2000, including a share of the Pac-10 title and a 41–9 victory over Notre Dame in the Fiesta Bowl. Now it's time for Smith to make new memories in Corvallis. He takes over at his alma mater after a six-year apprenticeship under the highly respected Chris Petersen — two years as the quarterbacks coach at Boise State and four as the offensive coordinator at Washington. The job will not be easy: Oregon State has won a combined seven games in the last three seasons and is in the midst of its worst stretch since the mid-1990s — just prior to Smith's arrival as a player. His age (39) and lack of experience as a head coach make this hire a bit of a gamble, but Smith seems like the right coach at the right time for a program searching for some positive vibes.



15 Matt Luke, Ole Miss

Previous Job: Interim Head Coach, Ole Miss

After guiding Ole Miss to a 6–6 record — punctuated by a win at rival Mississippi State — under difficult circumstances, Luke was named the permanent head coach at his alma mater in late November. Some will argue that Luke was given the job only because of the school's ongoing issues with the NCAA, but there is no denying he did a solid job in his first season as a head coach at any level. With no postseason to play for, Ole Miss improved its win total by one game (both overall and in conference) and showed significant improvement statistically despite losing quarterback Shea Patterson to an injury in the seventh game. This is far from the sexiest hire, but Luke will do a fine job stabilizing a program that has been rocked by scandal in recent years.

Pruitt: Kyle Zedaker/Tennessee Athletics; Luke: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Lewis: Kent State Athletic Communications; Dimel: UTEP Athletics;; Bloomgren: Rice Athletics



16. Josh Heupel, UCF

Previous Job: Offensive Coordinator, Missouri

UCF is one of the most desirable Group of 5 jobs in the nation and offers a great opportunity for Heupel, who resuscitated his career as the offensive coordinator at Missouri after getting fired at Oklahoma, his alma mater, in 2014. Missouri led the SEC in total offense in both 2016 and '17 after ranking last in the league in the category the year prior to his arrival. The Tigers played an up-tempo attack that featured big plays in the passing game while also having success running the ball. Expectations will be very high at UCF, which is coming off a 13–0 season highlighted by a win over Auburn in the Peach Bowl. With its stock soaring, UCF was in position to make a bigger splash with this hire but opted to tab another offensive coordinator from a Power 5 school after having great success going that route with Scott Frost.

17. Sean Lewis, Kent State

Previous Job: Offensive Coordinator, Syracuse

This is a difficult job. Dating back to 1978, the Golden Flashes have won more than six games only twice — seven games in 1987 under Glen Mason and 11 in 2012 under Darrell Hazell. Now, Kent State turns to **Lewis (above)**, a Dino Babers disciple who will bring an offshoot of the Art Briles attack that was so successful at Baylor. Lewis was on Babers' staff at Bowling Green — Kent State's MAC East rival — in 2014-15 when the Falcons won a total of 18 games on the strength of offenses that averaged 432.9 yards in 2014 and 546.8 in 2015. (To put that in context, Kent State averaged 275.2 in 2017.) Lewis is no doubt a gamble; he's 31 — the youngest coach in the FBS ranks by three years — and he's never called plays. But Kent State is a program that needs to take chances. Maybe they can catch the next great offensive coach on his way up the food chain.

18. Chad Lunsford, Georgia Southern

Previous Job: Interim Head Coach, Georgia Southern

Lunsford, the special teams coordinator during the ill-fated (and brief) Tyson Summers era, was promoted to the top job after leading the Eagles to a 2–4 record (after an 0–6 start) as the interim head coach. He was also on the Georgia Southern staff under Mike Sewak (2003-05), Jeff Monken (2013) and Willie Fritz (2014-15). With offensive coordinator Bob DeBesse, formerly at New Mexico, calling the plays, the Eagles will run a variation of the option attack that has been so successful under previous regimes. Georgia Southern is one of the better jobs in the Sun Belt Conference; don't be surprised if Lunsford has this program near the top of the league in the near future.

19. Mike Bloomgren, Rice

Previous Job: Offensive Coordinator, Stanford

David Bailiff did some good things at Rice — two 10-win seasons and four bowl games in 11 years — but the program has struggled mightily in recent years. Bloomgren spent the last seven seasons working for David Shaw at Stanford, including the last four as the offensive coordinator — though he has never been the Cardinal's primary play caller. This hire makes sense for Rice. Bloomgren is a respected coordinator who has worked for an outstanding head coach at a school with a similar academic profile. Now, he just needs to win some games.



20. Dana Dimel, UTEP

Previous Job: Offensive Coordinator, Kansas State

Dimel no doubt figured his days as a head coach were done after getting fired at Houston in 2002 after compiling an 8–26 record in three seasons at the school. He did, however, have success at Wyoming, winning 22 games in three seasons from 1997-99. He's spent the last nine seasons at Kansas State, his alma mater, most recently as the Wildcats' offensive coordinator. Now he finds himself in charge once again at the age of 55 at a school that has had one winning season in the past 12 years. This was a curious hire.



21. Herm Edwards, Arizona State

Previous Job: Head Coach, Kansas City Chiefs (2008)

Arizona State's decision to replace Todd Graham, who went 31–23 in the Pac-12 in six seasons, with Edwards, who has not coached since 2008 and has not been in the collegiate game since 1989, is one of the most puzzling decisions in recent history. This might work out well for Arizona State, which has long been considered a sleeping giant. But it could also be a disaster. The guess here is that the latter scenario is more likely.

Coaches on the Hot Seat

HOT SEAT



1. David Beaty, Kansas (3-33, three seasons)

The Kansas administration continues to support Beaty, but that cannot continue much longer unless the Jayhawks begin to show significant progress. The numbers are horrifying: 1-32 vs. FBS opponents; last in the Big 12 in total offense all three seasons; last in the Big 12 in total defense in two of his three seasons; and negative scoring margins of 24.7 points per game (2017), 17.0 per game ('16) and 30.8 per game ('15).

2. Bob Davie, New Mexico (30-45, six seasons)

Davie orchestrated a nice turnaround in Albuquerque, guiding the Lobos to consecutive winning seasons in 2015-16, but things took a turn for the worse in 2017 — both on and off the field. UNM slumped to 3-9 overall (1-7 in the MW), and then Davie was suspended for 30 days in wake of an athletics department investigation into the football program. Tough times for the former Notre Dame coach.

3. Brad Lambert, Charlotte (17-41, five seasons)

After going a combined 10-12 as an FBS Independent in 2013-14 (the program's first two years in existence), Lambert and the 49ers have struggled in their transition to Conference USA. Charlotte is 7-29 overall and 4-20 in league play since joining C-USA in 2015, including a 1-11 mark in 2017. The 49ers scored seven points or fewer in five of 12 games last season.

4. Scottie Montgomery, East Carolina (6-18, two seasons)

Montgomery was considered a rising star while serving as the offensive coordinator at Duke, his alma mater, but he has struggled in his two years as the head coach at East Carolina. The Pirates have won only three games each season due largely to some epic struggles on defense. Not only did ECU rank last in the nation in 2017 in both total defense (541.7 ypg) and scoring defense (45.0 ppg), but the 7.7 yards per play allowed was the worst in college football in at least a decade.

5. Mike Jinks, Bowling Green (6-18, two seasons)



Bowling Green averaged nine wins from 2012-15 and won three straight MAC East titles ('13-15) but has slipped down the league's food chain. The Falcons closed 2016 with some momentum — consecutive wins over Akron, Kent State and Buffalo — but went 2-10 in 2017 thanks to a defense that allowed more than 500 yards per game.

6. Kliff Kingsbury, Texas Tech (30-33, five seasons)

Despite winning only six games in 2017, Kingsbury was retained for a sixth season at his alma mater for two reasons: The Red Raiders showed significant improvement on defense, and they closed the regular season with a win at Texas. Still, the pressure will be on to take a step forward in 2018. Texas Tech is 16-29 in the Big 12 under Kingsbury's watch and has not finished higher than a tie for fifth place.



7. Lovie Smith, Illinois (5-19, two seasons)

It's been only two seasons, but the Lovie Smith experiment is not going well. Illinois regressed from 3-9 overall (2-7 in the Big Ten) in 2016 to 2-10 (0-9) last fall, with eight of the nine conference losses coming by 10 points or more. The Fighting Illini were very young in 2017 — they started nine freshmen and four sophomores in the finale against Northwestern — but there is no indication that they are talented. Recent hires at Purdue (Jeff Brohm), Minnesota (P.J. Fleck) and Nebraska (Scott Frost) will make Smith's job more difficult.

Davie; Jinks: AP; Smith: Tom Lynn; Mason, Harbaugh: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

Getting Warm

Larry Fedora, North Carolina

The Tar Heels have had a losing record in two of the last four seasons — including a 3–9 mark in 2017 — and have won more than eight games only once in Fedora's six seasons. Another disappointing season would no doubt put him on the hot seat.

Clay Helton, USC

Helton is 21–6 overall and 15–3 in the Pac-12 in his two full seasons as the boss at USC, but the locals don't seem convinced he is the right coach for the long term. Lopsided losses to Notre Dame (49–17) and Ohio State (24–7) overshadowed an otherwise solid 2017 season.

Paul Johnson, Georgia Tech

Johnson signed a two-year contract extension in the offseason that carries his deal through the 2022 season, but things could heat up in Atlanta if Georgia Tech struggles again in 2017. The Jackets are 17–19 overall and 9–15 in the ACC in the last three years.



Derek Mason, Vanderbilt

Mason reached a bowl game in 2016 and has defeated Tennessee in consecutive seasons, but he is 18–31 overall and just 6–26 in the SEC in four seasons. A defense that shined in 2015 and '16 took a big step back last fall.

Matt Wells, Utah State

Wells won a combined 19 games in his first two seasons but is 15–23 over the last three. He has one win in the past two years over an FBS team that went on to have a winning record (Arkansas State, 2016).

Everett Withers, Texas State

He's recruited very well, but Withers will need to show some results on the field in the very near future. The Bobcats are 4–20 overall and a horrid 1–15 in the Sun Belt in his two seasons.



No, he's not on the Hot Seat

Jim Harbaugh, Michigan

We realize he has yet to finish higher than third place in the Big Ten East. We realize he is a combined 1–5 against Michigan State and Ohio State. And we realize his 2017 season ended with three straight losses. But much to the dismay of his detractors, Harbaugh is not on the hot seat. Now the pressure will start to mount if the Wolverines fail to live up to their lofty expectations in 2018, but Harbaugh is in no danger of losing his job in the short term.

But he might be...

Herm Edwards, Arizona State

A first-year coach has never been on our Hot Seat list, but there have not been many (if any) first-year coaches like Edwards. The new boss in Tempe has not coached a game since 2008, his final season with the Kansas City Chiefs, and has not coached in college since finishing a three-year run as an assistant at San Jose State in 1989. This was a high-risk/medium-reward move by ASU athletic director Ray Anderson. It wouldn't be a shock if Edwards was back at ESPN in a year.

Continuity (or lack thereof)

Only 23 of the 65 Power 5 schools (35.4 percent) have had their current coach in place for at least five seasons. That number is down from 28 of 66 (42.4 percent) in 2008, but surprisingly up quite a bit from 1998, when 22 of the 63 teams (34.9 percent) in BCS conferences fit this criterion. So while there is more pressure than ever to win now, and schools are seemingly cutting ties after three or four years more frequently, the data indicates — at least in this unscientific study — that the number of coaches who remain at a program for a long period of time has not decreased in the past few decades. Below is the list of the 23 Power 5 schools that have a coach with at least five years of tenure heading into the 2018 season. (Note: Notre Dame is included in this data.)

ACC (6/14)
Boston College, Steve Addazio
Clemson, Dabo Swinney
Duke, David Cutcliffe
Georgia Tech, Paul Johnson
NC State, Dave Doeren
North Carolina, Larry Fedora

Big 12 (5/10)
Kansas State, Bill Snyder
Oklahoma State, Mike Gundy
TCU, Gary Patterson
Texas Tech, Kliff Kingsbury
West Virginia, Dana Holgorsen

Big Ten (4/14)
Iowa, Kirk Ferentz
Michigan State, Mark Dantonio
Northwestern, Pat Fitzgerald
Ohio State, Urban Meyer

Pac-12 (4/12)
Colorado, Mike MacIntyre
Stanford, David Shaw
Utah, Kyle Whittingham
Washington State, Mike Leach

SEC (3/14)
Alabama, Nick Saban
Auburn, Gus Malzahn
Kentucky, Mark Stoops

Independent (1/1)
Notre Dame, Brian Kelly

Coaches on the Rise



1

Dave Aranda, 41
Defensive Coordinator, LSU
Aranda further cements his reputation as one of the game's elite defensive coordinators each season. Last year, LSU ranked 12th nationally in total defense, and that was the worst ranking for an Aranda-coached defense in his five seasons at Power 5 schools. Texas A&M made a big push for Aranda in the offseason, but he opted to remain at LSU after signing a reported four-year, $10 million contract. It would be a major surprise if he were not a head coach somewhere before that deal expired.

2. Neal Brown, 38
Head Coach, Troy
After winning only four games in his first season at Troy, Brown has won 21 games over the last two seasons and recorded a 13–3 mark in the Sun Belt. The Trojans made national headlines last September with a 24–21 win at LSU, the school's first over an SEC opponent since 2001. In 2016, Troy nearly knocked off eventual national champion Clemson in Week 2, losing 30–24 in Death Valley.

3. Jason Candle, 38
Head Coach, Toledo
Candle is 20–7 overall and 13–3 in the MAC in his two full seasons after taking over for his old boss, Matt Campbell. And last year, he accomplished something Campbell failed to do — win a league title, the first at the school since 2004. The Rockets continue to thrive on offense, leading the MAC in yards per game in each of the past two seasons.

4. Mike Norvell, 36
Head Coach, Memphis
Norvell has done a masterful job keeping Memphis relevant after taking over for Justin Fuente. He followed up an 8–5 rookie season in 2016 by winning 10 games and the AAC West Division title in 2017. The Tigers ranked fourth nationally in total offense (532.1 ypg) and second in scoring offense (45.5 ppg) last fall and finished ranked in the final AP Top 25 for the second time in school history. Despite this impressive résumé, Norvell did not get a serious look for any of several SEC openings in the offseason.

5. Bryan Harsin, 41
Head Coach, Boise State
Harsin got the call to take over at his alma mater in 2014 after Chris Petersen finally made the decision to take a Power 5 job. The former Bronco quarterback is 42–12 overall and 25–7 in the Mountain West in four seasons, and the Broncos have finished in the top four in the league in both total offense and total defense each season. He also spent one season at Arkansas State, where he guided the Red Wolves to a tie for first in the Sun Belt.

6. Scott Satterfield, 45
Head Coach, Appalachian State
The Mountaineers have made a remarkably smooth transition from the FCS to FBS ranks under Satterfield's watch. After going 4–8 overall and 4–4 in the Southern Conference in 2013 — the school's final season in the FCS — Appalachian State is 37–14 overall and 27–5 in the Sun Belt from '14-17. Over the last two seasons, five of its seven losses have come by seven points or fewer, including an OT loss to Tennessee in 2016 and a one-point loss to Wake Forest in 2017.

7. Blake Anderson, 49,
Head Coach, Arkansas State
After losing Hugh Freeze, Gus Malzahn and Bryan Harsin after only one season apiece, Arkansas State was seeking some stability when it hired Anderson in 2014. The former offensive coordinator at North Carolina has given the Red Wolves four solid seasons that have included two Sun Belt titles and four bowl games. The Red Wolves have ranked in the top two in the league in total offense in three of four seasons, and last season they ranked third nationally with 81.3 offensive plays per game.

8. Todd Orlando, 47
Defensive Coordinator, Texas
Orlando has been a coordinator in the FBS ranks since 2005, but his career took off when he joined Tom Herman's first staff at Houston in 2015. A former linebacker at Wisconsin in the early 1990s, Orlando did a nice job in his first season at Texas; the Longhorns in 2017 allowed 82.7 fewer yards and 10.3 fewer points per game than in 2016. And as the talent level continues to rise in Austin, the UT defense will no doubt be among the best in the league on an annual basis.

9. Jim Leonhard, 35
Defensive Coordinator, Wisconsin
Leonhard was promoted to the defensive coordinator post after only one season as a position coach at his alma mater. The results were strong for the three-time All-American and longtime NFL safety. In 2017, the Badgers ranked second in the nation in total defense (262.1 ypg) and third in scoring defense (13.9 ppg). They allowed only seven rushing touchdowns (second fewest in the nation) and intercepted 20 passes (tied for second nationally). This was a defense without a weakness.

10. Seth Littrell, 41
Head Coach, North Texas
Littrell has directed a quick turnaround at North Texas, guiding the Mean Green to four-game improvements in each of his two seasons — from 1–11 the year prior to his arrival to 5–8 in 2016 and 9–5 (and a C-USA West title) in 2017. His 14 wins over the last two years are the most at North Texas since 2003-04, the tail end of Darrell Dickey's run of four straight Sun Belt titles.

5 MORE TO WATCH

Beau Baldwin, 46, OC, California
Ryan Day, 39, Co-OC, Ohio State
Mike Elko, 40, DC, Texas A&M
Pete Golding, 34, Co-DC, Alabama
Alex Grinch, 37, Co-DC, Ohio State

Aranda: AP; Elko: Texas A&M Athletics; Rahne: Penn State Athletics; Bell: Colin Abbey/FSU

Top Coordinator Hires for 2018



1

Mike Elko, DC, Texas A&M
New Texas A&M coach Jimbo Fisher lured Elko away from Notre Dame to fix an area that has plagued this program since it joined the SEC. The Aggies have not once finished in the top half of the league in total defense and have ranked no higher than seventh in scoring defense. That should change under Elko, who paid immediate dividends in his one season at Notre Dame after a strong — and under the radar — run at Wake Forest under Dave Clawson.

2. Alex Grinch, DC, Ohio State
Grinch was a little-known defensive backs coach at Missouri when Mike Leach hired him in 2015 to take over the Washington State defense. The results were impressive. The Cougars improved from 442.3 yards per game allowed the season prior to his arrival to 416.8 in Year 1, 405.9 in Year 2 and 323.3 in Year 3. They made similar gains in scoring defense, culminating with an average of 25.8 points allowed in 2017, the lowest at Wazzu since 2003. Grinch will team with Greg Schiano as co-defensive coordinators for the Buckeyes.

3. Todd Grantham, DC, Florida
Grantham is making the move from Mississippi State to Florida with new Gator head coach Dan Mullen. Grantham did a tremendous job in his only season in Starkville; the Bulldogs made dramatic improvements in total defense (459.1 ypg in 2016 to 306.3 in 2017) and scoring defense (31.8 ppg to 20.9).

4. Bob Shoop, DC, Mississippi State
Shoop carved out a reputation as one of the game's top coordinators after successful stints at Vanderbilt (2011-13) and Penn State (2014-15), but his defenses struggled mightily in his two seasons at Tennessee. He now has a chance for a fresh start at Mississippi State working under new head coach Joe Moorhead.

5. Tim Cramsey, OC, Marshall
Cramsey, who worked for Chip Kelly at New Hampshire in the 2000s, comes to Marshall after a successful one-year stint at Sam Houston State. In 2017, the Bearkats averaged 538.1 yards of offense and had a 5,000-yard passer, an 1,100-yard rusher and two 1,200-yard receivers. Previously, Cramsey was the offensive coordinator at Nevada, Montana State and FIU.

6. Pete Golding, Co-DC, Alabama
Nick Saban plucked Golding, a rising star in the coaching world, off of the UTSA staff as Alabama's 10th assistant and gave him the title of co-defensive coordinator and inside linebackers coach. During his two years at UTSA, the Roadrunners ranked first and fourth in Conference USA in total defense and first and third in scoring defense.

7

Walt Bell, OC, Florida State

A Larry Fedora protégé, Bell received his first coordinator job at Arkansas State in 2014, moved to Maryland in 2016 and then took this position at Florida State under new coach Willie Taggart. His offenses struggled at Maryland due in large part to a series of injuries at the quarterback position.



8. Tracy Claeys, DC, Washington State
Claeys was out of coaching in 2017 after being fired after one full season as the head coach at Minnesota. He previously served as the defensive coordinator at Minnesota, Northern Illinois, Southern Illinois and Emporia State — working for Jerry Kill at every spot.

9. Bush Hamdan, OC, Washington
Hamdan returns to Washington after a one-year stint as the quarterbacks coach with the Atlanta Falcons. He previously served as UW's wide receivers coach and passing game coordinator in 2016 and offensive quality control assistant in 2015.



10

Ricky Rahne, OC, Penn State
Rahne has been the quarterbacks coach for James Franklin dating back to Franklin's first season at Vanderbilt in 2011. He was passed over for the OC job two years ago in favor of Joe Moorhead, at the time the head coach at Fordham. With Moorhead off to Mississippi State, Rahne gets his shot to run the Nittany Lions' offense.

11. Kendal Briles, OC, Houston
Lane Kiffin received most of the credit for FAU's breakout 2017 season, but it was Briles calling most of the shots for an offense that averaged 40.6 points and 498.4 yards per game. Briles still carries — and probably always will carry — some baggage from his days working for his father at Baylor, but Houston obviously felt comfortable with the hire.

12. Rhett Lashlee, OC, SMU
After working for Gus Malzahn at both Arkansas State and Auburn for five seasons, Lashlee branched out on his own for one season at UConn. The raw numbers aren't overly impressive (415.2 yards and 23.6 points per game), but the Huskies improved by 95.2 yards and 8.8 points per game.

QB Transfers



Woody Barrett,
Auburn to Kent State (via JC)

A former four-star recruit, Barrett transferred to Copiah-Lincoln (Miss.) Community College after spring practice in 2017. He will play for new Kent State coach Sean Lewis, a Dino Babers disciple who was the offensive coordinator at Syracuse last season.

Dru Brown,
Hawaii to Oklahoma State

Brown (above, right) threw for 5,273 yards and 37 touchdowns in his two seasons at Hawaii after transferring from junior college. He will be expected to replace Mason Rudolph as the triggerman for the high-octane Oklahoma State offense.

Keller Chryst,
Stanford to Tennessee



Chryst was the No. 3 pro-style QB recruit in the Class of 2014, but his stay on The Farm was hampered by injury and inconsistent play. He will have one season of eligibility as a graduate transfer and will have a great opportunity to start for the Volunteers.

KJ Carta-Samuels,
Washington to Colorado State

A former four-star recruit, Carta-Samuels backed up Jake Browning for the past three seasons after redshirting in 2014. He is the frontrunner to replace Nick Stevens as the Rams' starter.

Brandon Dawkins,
Arizona to Indiana

Dawkins threw for 2,418 yards and 15 TDs and rushed for 1,582 and 20 scores in three seasons at Arizona. He started nine games in 2016 and the first five in 2017 before losing his job to Khalil Tate.

Kai Locksley,
Texas to UTEP (via JC)

The son of Alabama offensive coordinator Mike Locksley spent a season at Texas before transferring to Iowa Western Community College. The dual threat should thrive under head coach Dana Dimel.

Gardner Minshew,
East Carolina to Washington State

After throwing for 2,140 yards with 16 TDs in 2017, Minshew announced he was heading to Alabama as a grad transfer — then changed course and will now spend his final season on the Palouse.

James Morgan,
Bowling Green to FIU

Morgan started 13 games in the past two seasons at Bowling Green, throwing for 3,342 yards and 25 TDs. He will have two seasons of eligibility remaining.

Shea Patterson,
Ole Miss to Michigan

If eligible in 2018, Patterson becomes the most impactful transfer in the nation. A five-star recruit, Patterson threw for 3,139 yards and 23 TDs in 10 games at Ole Miss.

Chris Robison,
Oklahoma to FAU

Robison, a top-200 national recruit in the Class of 2017, left Oklahoma after just one semester and one summer in Norman. He and De'Andre Johnson, of "Last Chance U" fame, are the top two candidates to replace Jason Driskel.

Bryce Perkins,
Arizona State to Virginia (via JC)

Perkins did not attempt a pass at Arizona State and played last fall at Arizona Western College. He will have a chance to replace Kurt Benkert as the Cavs QB.

Alex Thomson,
Wagner to Marshall

Thomson was one of the most highly sought-after grad transfers on the market and picked Marshall over Baylor and Tennessee. He missed most of last season with a shoulder injury.

Brady White,
Arizona State to Memphis

White was the highest-rated quarterback to sign with Arizona State in the internet recruiting era but started only one game and attempted only 49 passes in his three seasons in Tempe. He will have two years of eligibility as a graduate transfer.

Terry Wilson,
Oregon to Kentucky (via JC)

Wilson redshirted at Oregon in 2016 before spending last season at Garden City (Kan.) Community College.

Vic Viramontes,
California to Minnesota (via JC)

Viramontes threw for 1,868 yards and rushed for 1,346 while accounting for a total of 43 touchdowns in his only season at Riverside (Calif.) City College. He has a great opportunity to win the job.

15 OTHER NOTABLE TRANSFERS

Calvin Anderson, OL
Rice to Texas

Kenny Bigelow, DL
USC to West Virginia

Byron Cowart, OL
Auburn to Maryland

Breiden Fehoko, DL
Texas Tech to LSU

Jonathan Giles, WR
Texas Tech to LSU

Jake Fruhmorgen, OL
Clemson to Baylor

Alohi Gilman, DB
Navy to Notre Dame

Jon Hilliman, RB
Boston College to Rutgers

Casey Hughes, DB
Utah to Michigan

Jalen Hurd, ATH
Tennessee to Baylor

P.J. Mbanasor, CB
Oklahoma to Louisville

Travon McMillian, RB
Virginia Tech to Colorado

Casey Tucker, OL
Stanford to Arizona State

Ke'Shawn Vaughn, RB
Illinois to Vanderbilt

Tre Watson, LB
Illinois to Maryland

Breakout Players

Cam Akers, RB, Florida State

New coach Willie Taggart inherits plenty of talent to work with on offense next fall. One of the most exciting weapons is Akers, a five-star recruit from the 2017 signing class. Akers shared carries with Jacques Patrick last fall and still ended up with 1,025 yards and seven rushing scores and caught 16 passes for 116 yards and a touchdown.

Trajan Bandy, CB, Miami (Fla.)

The Hurricanes should feature one of the nation's top defensive backfields in 2018 thanks in part to the return of cornerback Michael Jackson and safety Jaquan Johnson. The new star on the scene is **Bandy (below)**. As a freshman in 2017, he broke up six passes, registered 25 tackles and intercepted one pass.



Tarik Black/Donovan Peoples-Jones, WRs, Michigan

Michigan's passing attack should take a significant step forward in 2018 regardless of who starts at quarterback. Peoples-Jones caught 22 passes for 277 yards as a true freshman last season and should see his role increase in 2018. Black, also a true freshman in 2017, caught 11 passes through three games before suffering a season-ending injury.

Hunter Bryant, TE, Washington

Washington's passing attack needs new weapons to emerge to replace wide receiver Dante Pettis. Bryant flashed potential in nine games last year, catching 22 passes for 331 yards and a touchdown.



Stephen Carr, RB, USC

USC's offense will have to reload in 2018, as quarterback Sam Darnold, running back Ronald Jones and receiver Deontay Burnett all jumped to the NFL a year early. However, the cupboard isn't bare for coordinator Tee Martin. Carr is a future star after rushing for 363 yards and three scores as a freshman in 2017. He should be the feature back in 2018.

Dylan Moses, LB, Alabama

Moses, a former five-star recruit, likely will emerge as the next great Alabama linebacker. The Florida native started two games and recorded 30 tackles as a true freshman. He missed the two CFB Playoff games with a foot injury but will be back to full health in the fall.

Kyler Murray, QB, Oklahoma

Baker Mayfield leaves big shoes to fill in Norman, but Oklahoma's offense should be in good hands with Murray — a former transfer from Texas A&M — at the controls. More of a dual-threat than his predecessor, Murray completed 18-of-21 passes for 359 yards and three touchdowns and rushed for 142 yards on 14 attempts in spot duty last season.

Jeffrey Okudah, CB, Ohio State

Okudah, the top-ranked cornerback by the 247Sports Composite in the Class of 2017, played in every game as a reserve as a true freshman. With Denzel Ward off to the NFL, Okudah is ready to take on a full-time role.

Jawon Pass, QB, Louisville

Pass has the skill set to become coach Bobby Petrino's next star pupil under center. After a redshirt year, Pass appeared in six games as Lamar Jackson's backup in 2017. In limited action, he completed 23-of-33 passes for 238 yards and two scores and rushed for 62 yards and a TD on 13 attempts.

Malcolm Perry, QB, Navy

Perry started the 2017 season at slot back but shifted to quarterback late in the year. The Tennessee native provided a spark for Navy's offense, rushing for 282 yards in a win against SMU, 250 against Army and 114 in the victory over Virginia in the Military Bowl.

Jaelan Phillips, DL, UCLA

Phillips ranked as the No. 1 overall recruit in the 247Sports Composite in 2017 but was limited to just seven games as a freshman due to injury. He should emerge as one of the top defensive linemen in the nation as a sophomore.



Jalen Reagor, WR, TCU

The new quarterback at TCU — either Justin Rogers or Shawn Robinson — needs to get the ball in Reagor's hands. As a true freshman in 2017, the former top-50 national recruit caught 33 passes for 576 yards and eight scores.

Miles Sanders, RB, Penn State

It's no secret the Nittany Lions are going to miss running back Saquon Barkley. But coach James Franklin has recruited well, and Sanders — a former five-star prospect in the 2016 signing class — is poised to take over the No. 1 role in the backfield. He has averaged 6.7 yards per carry in limited duty the last two years.

Dillon Stoner, WR, Oklahoma State

Oklahoma State possessed the nation's best receiving corps in 2017, but this unit is set to undergo some renovations with the loss of James Washington and Marcell Ateman. Stoner could emerge as the No. 1 target after catching 44 passes for 576 yards and six touchdowns as a freshman in 2017.

Tua Tagovailoa, QB, Alabama

Tagovailoa jumped into the national spotlight with his performance against Georgia in the national championship and should be the starting quarterback in 2018. The sample size is small, but the Hawaii native has been impressive.

Chryst, Carr, Brown: Peter Brouillet; Patterson: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Bandy: Tom DiPace; Reagor Jay Biggerstaff

Back from Injury

Trey Adams, OL, Washington
A first-team All-Pac-12 pick in 2016, Adams went down with a knee injury in a Week 7 loss at Arizona State. He will return to anchor the Huskies' offensive line from the left tackle spot.

Tarik Black, WR, Michigan
A key member of Michigan's 2017 recruiting class, Black was limited to three games and 11 receptions as a true freshman. He will be expected to play a big role in the Wolverines' passing attack this fall.



Tre Bryant, RB, Nebraska
After rushing for a total of 172 yards as a freshman in 2016, Bryant erupted for 192 yards in the opener against Arkansas State and had 107 in Week 2 against Oregon before suffering a season-ending knee injury. He will be a weapon for new Huskers head coach Scott Frost.

Damarea Crockett, RB, Missouri
Crockett rushed for 1,062 yards on a 6.9-yard average as a true freshman in 2016 and had 481 on a 6.0 average through six-plus games in 2017 before a shoulder injury kept him out for the rest of the season.

Deondre Francois, QB, Florida State
Francois' season-ending knee injury in Week 1 was a crushing blow to Florida State, which was forced to turn the offense over to true freshman James Blackman. Francois and Blackman will battle for the top job in 2018.

QBs on the mend

Florida State's Deondre Francois and Maryland's Kasim Hill and Tyrrell Pigrome were each injured early in the 2017 season and missed a combined 32 games. There was also a group of prominent quarterbacks who went down late in the regular season or in the bowl game, and each is expected back for the 2018 season: Nick Fitzgerald, Mississippi State (broken ankle in regular-season finale); Will Grier, West Virginia (broken finger against Texas in mid-November); Clayton Thorson, Northwestern (torn ACL in the bowl game); David Blough, Purdue (dislocated ankle in early November); Elijah Sindelar, Purdue (ACL in mid-November but played rest of the season); Anthony Brown, Boston College (lower leg injury in mid-November); and Tanner Mangum, BYU (Achilles in early November).

Porter Gustin, LB, USC
A former top-50 national recruit, Gustin played in only four games last season due to various injuries. He will return for his senior season as the starting outside linebacker.

Kasim Hill, Tyrrell Pigrome, QBs, Maryland
Pigrome tore the ACL in his right knee during Maryland's Week 1 upset win at Texas. Hill, his replacement, suffered the same injury two games later in a loss to UCF. Both are expected to be ready for the start of the 2018 season.

Darrin Kirkland, LB, Tennessee
After starting 16 games in his first two seasons, Kirkland was expected to be the leader of the Tennessee defense last fall from his middle linebacker spot. He didn't play a snap, however, after injuring his knee in preseason camp.

Ryan Pulley, CB, Arkansas
Pulley was a preseason All-SEC candidate last season but didn't make it out of the first game of the season. He went down with a right pectoral injury in the second quarter of the loss to TCU and did not play another snap.

John Reid, CB, Penn State
Reid, who started 14 games as a sophomore in 2016, injured his knee last spring and missed the entire 2017 season. He will be a preseason All-Big Ten pick heading into the fall.

Demetris Robertson, WR, California
The No. 1 wide receiver recruit in the Class of 2016, Robertson caught 50 passes for 767 yards and seven TDs as a true freshman but was limited to two games and seven catches in 2017 due to a "lower body" injury. He should be one of the top wide receivers in the Pac-12 this season.

Deebo Samuel, WR, South Carolina
Samuel's injury — he suffered a broken leg in Week 3 — was a huge setback for the South Carolina offense. In 2016, he caught 59 passes for 783 yards and added six rushing touchdowns. He is also a threat on special teams.

Cody Thompson, WR, Toledo
Thompson caught 64 passes for 1,269 yards as a junior in 2016 and was on pace for even more last fall before injuring his leg in the fifth game of the season. He had 28 receptions and was averaging 19.2 yards per catch at the time of his injury.

Nick Westbrook, WR, Indiana
Westbrook was very productive as a sophomore in 2016, averaging 18.4 yards on his 54 catches for 995 yards and six touchdowns. His 2017 season ended after one play — he was injured on the opening kickoff in Week 1 against Ohio State.

Antoine Winfield Jr., CB, Minnesota
The son of the former NFL cornerback broke into the starting lineup as a true freshman in 2016 but was limited to four games last season due to a hamstring injury in late September.

Crockett: Tim Umphrey; Oliver: AP; Stockstill: Brent Beerends, MT Athletic Communications; Rypien: John C. Kelly/Boise State University

Top Group of 5 Players



1

Ed Oliver, DL, Houston

Oliver has been one of the best players in the country since the first game of his freshman season. He earned first-team All-America honors by seven media outlets as a true freshman in 2016 and was a consensus All-American last fall.

2. McKenzie Milton, QB, UCF

Milton was ranked as the No. 1,161 recruit in the nation by the 247Sports Composite coming out of Kapolei, Hawaii, in 2016. Two years later, he threw for 4,037 yards and 37 touchdowns and rushed for 613 yards and eight scores for an undefeated UCF team.

3. Sutton Smith, DE, Northern Illinois

Smith was arguably the most improved player in college football last season, recording 14.0 sacks and earning MAC Defense Player of the Year honors after failing to start a single game as a redshirt freshman in 2016.

4. Devin Singletary, RB, FAU

Singletary thrived in Lane Kiffin's offense, rushing for 1,920 yards and 32 touchdowns (most in the nation) for the Conference USA champs. In two years, he has 2,941 yards rushing and 44 touchdowns.

5. Andrew Wingard, S, Wyoming

Wingard is a two-time first-team All-Mountain West pick who has recorded 245 tackles over the last two seasons.

6. Max Scharping, OL, Northern Illinois

Scharping has been a standout on the Huskies' offensive line for the last three seasons, starting at right tackle in 2015 and '16 and left tackle last season. He earned first-team All-MAC honors in both '16 and '17.

7. Penny Hart, WR, Georgia State

Hart bounced back from a season-ending injury in 2016 to catch 74 passes for 1,121 yards and eight touchdowns as a sophomore in 2017. Two years earlier, he caught 71 receptions for 1,099 as a true freshman.

8. Anthony Johnson, WR, Buffalo

Johnson, a former junior college transfer, won the receiving triple crown in the MAC, leading the league in receptions (76), yards (1,356) and touchdown catches (14). Over the final three games, he totaled 468 yards on a 22.3 yards-per-catch average with eight TDs.

9. Mason Fine, QB, North Texas

Fine was a great find by North Texas coach Seth Littrell. Two years ago, he was a two-star recruit without any FBS offers. Last year, he threw for 4,052 yards and 31 TDs and led the Mean Green to the C-USA West title.



10

Brent Stockstill, QB, Middle Tennessee

Stockstill's junior season was derailed by an injury, but the son of the Blue Raiders' coach has been extremely productive since he took over as the starting QB as a redshirt freshman in 2015.

11. Jaylon Ferguson, DL, Louisiana Tech

Ferguson has been a force on the Bulldogs' defensive line, recording a total of 21.5 sacks over the last two seasons. He is a two-time first-team All-C-USA pick.

12. Khalil Hodge, LB, Buffalo

Hodge is a two-time All-MAC honoree who has recorded an astounding 277 tackles in his two seasons with the Bulls after transferring from the junior college ranks.



13. Brett Rypien, QB, Boise State

The nephew of former Super Bowl-winning quarterback Mark Rypien is a two-time first-team All-Mountain West quarterback who has thrown for 9,873 yards and 60 TDs in his three years as the Broncos' starter.

14. Jalin Moore, RB, Appalachian State

Moore has led the Sun Belt in rushing in each of the last two years and heads into his senior season with 3,170 yards on a 6.1-yard average.

15. Ulysees Gilbert, LB, Akron

Gilbert has earned first-team All-MAC honors in each of his two seasons as a starter. Last season, he filled up the stat sheet with 141 tackles, five sacks, three interceptions and one forced fumble.

16. Cody Thompson, Diontae Johnson, WRs, Toledo

Johnson caught 74 passes for 1,278 yards and 13 touchdowns as a sophomore in 2017. A leg injury limited Thompson to 28 catches in four-plus games last season. He had 64 receptions for 1,269 yards in 2016.

17. John Keenoy, OL, Western Michigan

Keenoy won the starting center position as a true freshman in 2015 and has played in 37 of a possible 38 games over the last three years. He was a first-team All-MAC pick in 2017.

18. Carl Granderson, DL, Wyoming

Granderson returned from a knee injury that sidelined him for the second half of the 2016 season, leading the team with 9.5 sacks.

19. Malik Reed, LB, Nevada

Reed is making the move from defensive end — where he earned first-team All-MW honors in 2017 — to outside linebacker for his senior season.

20. Malcolm Perry, QB, Navy

Perry started last season as a slot back but took over as the Midshipmen's starting quarterback late in the year. He rushed for 1,182 yards on a gaudy 8.6-yard average.



THE PROS & CONS OF Jim Harbaugh

HARBAUGH WILL PREVAIL

By Michael Bradley

The early spring of 2018 was a great time to be a Michigan Wolverine. U-M reached the Final Four and Frozen Four on successive days — the fourth time the school has pulled off that impressive double.

This fall, it's the football team's turn to create some excitement — and it's going to happen. The quick-to-criticize Michigan fan base should ease up on the grousing, because Jim Harbaugh's going to get it done. He may not reach the College Football Playoff, but he's going to have the Wolverines in a better spot than last year's 8–5 record, and he's definitely still the right man for the job in Ann Arbor. Calling for his ouster is shortsighted and just wrong. There is no other person on the college landscape better suited for leading the Wolverines. The man is Michigan. Period.

Harbaugh has changed the personality of what had become a stodgy, uber-traditional program — even though Rich Rodriguez tried to turn it into Morgantown West for three years. It's one thing to wear winged helmets and quite another to have an institutional culture that resembled 1938, when Fritz Crisler introduced those helmets. Harbaugh can be strange and quixotic. His press conferences sometimes seem intentionally surreal, as if he is trying to confuse the media — along with everybody else. And Harbaugh can seem extremely detached at times. The man's an odd duck. You can bet a year's supply of whole milk (none of that skim stuff) on that.

He's also a tremendous recruiter — the close of the '18 cycle notwithstanding — who has upgraded Michigan's talent level considerably. He understands the importance of a bloodthirsty defense enough that he hired Don Brown to run Michigan's and gave him full authority to turn loose a collection of athletic marauders. He knows the game.

> *Pro:*
>
> Jim Harbaugh is the proverbial Michigan Man who is right where he belongs.

Most important, he knows Michigan.

Things are far from perfect in Ann Arbor. Michigan is in a death struggle with OSU, MSU and Penn State for primacy in the toughest division in college football. The Wolverines haven't won the Big

AP

Ten title since Lloyd Carr ran the program, and they enter 2018 with questions at offensive line and quarterback.

But Harbaugh remains great for the program because he thinks big at all times. His offense may be old school, but his ability to relate to young athletes and to create the kind of lionhearted expectations they love makes him a perfect 21st century coach.

Harbaugh's 2016 and '17 recruiting classes were outstanding, and last year's lineup featured plenty of young players with bright futures. This year's team could be the most athletic Michigan outfit in a long time. But there is work to do. Harbaugh must add some spread concepts to his offense, and he must find a way to beat the Spartans and Buckeyes, against whom he is 1–5.

Harbaugh will prevail. He is a true Michigan believer who wants to win as much for his alma mater as for his own edification. He loves the place. He doesn't just wear the Block M because it's a symbol of his employer. It's who he is and who he has always been. When his father, Jack, was a coach at Stanford, teenaged Jim stood on the sidelines with him before the Cal-Stanford game and heard the P.A. announcer say, "Welcome to the Big Game." Young Jim turned to his father and said, "Dad, we know where the real Big Game is being played today." He was referring to Michigan-OSU. It was the big one for him then, and U-M remains the only school for him now. Michigan fans would do well to understand that when passion meets talent, good things happen. Harbaugh certainly has the passion. And he has proven he has the talent.

Jim Harbaugh belongs in Ann Arbor.

To stay.

THE HONEYMOON IS OVER

Otis Reese was sealed and delivered. One problem: *He wasn't signed.*

By Sean Keeler

Otis Reese, a 6'4" linebacker/safety out of Leesburg, Ga., had committed to Michigan in June 2016, the summer after his sophomore year. One of Reese's former teammates, defensive lineman Aubrey Solomon, became a key cog in the Wolverines' Class of 2017. Michigan coach Jim Harbaugh even held a satellite camp in tiny Leesburg (2016 population: 3,013). All the stars were seemingly aligned.

Except for one.

About midway through this past February's National Signing Day, Reese backpedaled all the way to Athens. Harbaugh's top linebacker target put on a Georgia cap, announcing that he was staying home. "We were informed today," Harbaugh told reporters. "I wouldn't say it caught us off guard. We understood it was a possibility."

By the time the dust settled, 247Sports ranked Harbaugh's fourth recruiting haul at No. 21 nationally — just ahead of Nebraska and coach Scott Frost, who'd only been on the job since December — and third in the Big Ten behind the Buckeyes (No. 2) and Penn State (No. 5). It was the first time since 2011 that a Wolverines recruiting class didn't feature a single player from the 247Sports Composite top 100.

If you're going to poke the biggest bears in college football with a stick, you better darn well be ready to swing it. At the same juncture of Nick Saban's tenure at Alabama, the Crimson Tide were coming off a 14–0 campaign and a national title. At the same point in the Urban Meyer Era at Ohio State, the Buckeyes were coming off a 14–1 mark and a national title.

Harbaugh, meanwhile, comes off a Year 3 at Michigan that saw the Wolverines finish 8-5 — a bizarre season that opened with a win over Jim McElwain and ended with a bowl loss to Will Muschamp. McElwain is now a member of Harbaugh's staff, a hiring that capped an equally bizarre winter in Ann Arbor.

The trouble with firing out of the gate armed with an enthusiasm unknown to mankind is that you risk hitting a wall at about 150 miles per hour. It's hard to tell if Harbaugh is desperate, burned out, angry, or some soul-killing combination of the three.

But this much is painfully clear: The gap — in talent, trophies and gravitas — between Michigan and Meyer's Buckeyes is no smaller than it was during Harbaugh's first season on the job. Since the winter of 2015, Ohio State has brought in the nation's Nos. 7, 4, 2 and 2 recruiting classes, according to the 247Sports Composite. While the Buckeyes' last four hauls averaged a 3.75 national ranking, the Wolverines' classes averaged an 18.0 rank. During that same stretch, Penn State's classes averaged a rank of 13.5, pouring more kerosene on the idea that the Nittany Lions have passed Michigan as Meyer's top East Division threat.

And 1–5 — Harbaugh's record against Ohio State and Michigan State — is the match. Strike it and watch the sparks fly.

We can argue, as locals do, about the Looney Tunes stuff that transpired in the Wolverines' two losses to the Spartans since 2015. But 1–2 is 1–2. We can rage, as Maize and Blue bloods fume, about The Spot in the 2016 Ohio State game. But 0–3 is 0–3.

We can qualify Harbaugh's 9–8 record over his last 17 games as the by-product of quarterback injuries. But the man who raised the games of Andrew Luck, Alex Smith and Colin Kaepernick has also failed to develop a signal caller of similar renown at his alma mater. Maybe Ole Miss transfer Shea Patterson breaks the QB ceiling. Or maybe he just winds up breaking even more Ann Arbor hearts.

There isn't a Michigan man who doesn't want to see Harbaugh pull this wagon over the line. But even recruiting, the lifeblood of any program's future, is starting to sow seeds of doubt. Harbaugh wrangled only four top-200 recruits in his 2018 class. Michigan's previous two hauls had totaled 21 between them.

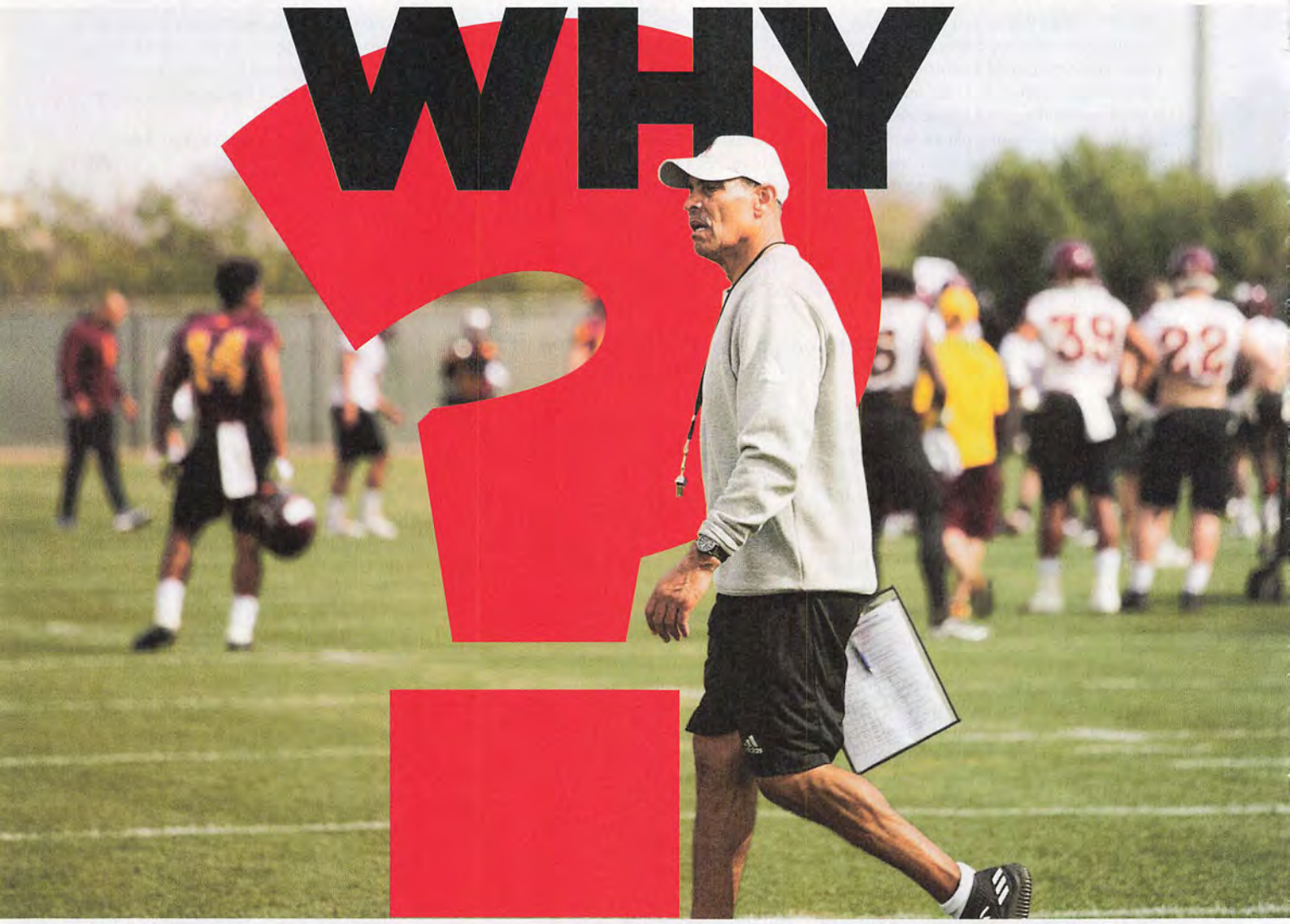
> *Con:*
>
> Harbaugh is already on borrowed time, and his Big Ten foes can sense his increasing weakness.

It's the same pattern of diminishing returns that dogged Rich Rodriguez, who didn't get a Year 4, and Brady Hoke, who didn't get a Year 5.

"In some ways, I think the honeymoon is over," 247Sports Midwest recruiting analyst Allen Trieu says of Harbaugh. "But that doesn't necessarily mean the name doesn't have meaning, though."

Only it doesn't mean as much as it used to. Early in the spring, a Michigan 2019 offensive line commit — Trente Jones out of Loganville, Ga. — announced on Twitter that he'd received an offer from Frost and Nebraska. There's blood in the water now, kids. And the rest of the Big Ten can smell it.

Herm Edwards WHY?



The reaction to Arizona State's hiring of Edwards has ranged from scorn to bewilderment, but he and his new bosses insist he's the right man for the job

By Ted Miller

Herman Edwards takes over the interview after half an hour and evangelizes for 20 uninterrupted minutes, unburdened by specific questions. He preaches. He sells. He talks X's and O's and technique. He proselytizes with feeling, punctuating points by slapping his palm on a meeting table in his new office inside Arizona State's recently completed and palatial football building.

"The great coaches are teachers (slam) … it's not about the coach, it's about the guys in the huddle (slam) … football is the greatest game ever assembled (slam) when you think about what it does … We will stumble, but I won't let you fall. I will catch you (slam, slam) … We are male by birth, man by choice. I'm going to teach them the man part.

"People ask how I am doing. I'm great. I'm in my world. This is what I do. I love this."

It's difficult not to be charmed by a whirlwind of what an *Arizona Republic* writer dubbed "Herm-isms" in a March story. Edwards' wisdom, collected during his 64 years, pinballs between topics almost randomly, but the connective tissue is his passion and enthusiasm.

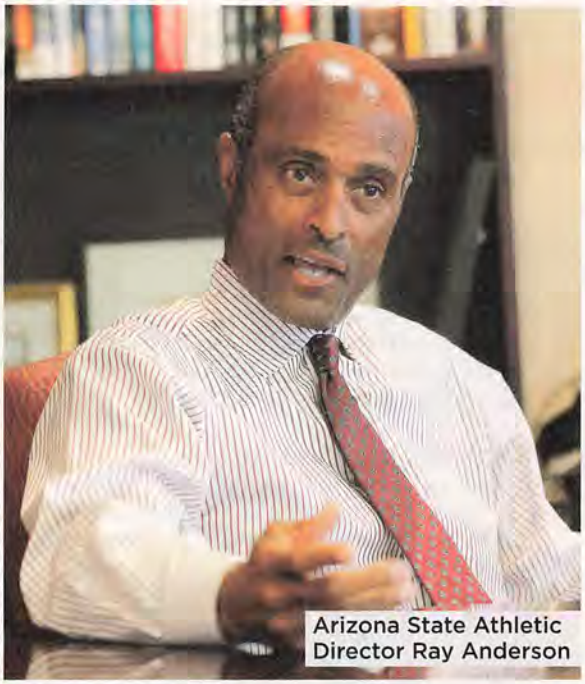
So it's no surprise when he waves away a question about whether he was bothered by the reaction to his hiring, which ranged from skepticism to outright mockery.

"No," he says. "That's America."

His résumé does have some gaps and red flags after a 10-year NFL playing career. His collegiate experience ended in 1989, after three years as a defensive backs coach at San Jose State. His record as an NFL head coach with the New York Jets and Kansas City Chiefs is 54–74. In his final season in Kansas City, he went 2–14.

He became an analyst at ESPN in 2009 and remained mostly out of the coaching rumor mill until his name immediately

Edwards: Arizona State Athletics; Anderson: AP



Arizona State Athletic Director Ray Anderson

emerged after athletic director Ray Anderson fired Todd Graham at the end of the Sun Devils' meandering 7–6 season.

"You have to ask yourself this: 'Do you have the energy to do this?' And there was no doubt I had the energy," Edwards says.

Wait. Let's back up. It's time to address the reason Edwards was even on the radar for a job in the collegiate ranks. There are dots, and they are easy to connect.

Before Anderson became Arizona State's athletic director in 2014 and before he spent seven-plus years as an NFL executive, he was a sports agent. Edwards was one of his clients, and that business relationship blossomed into a friendship — and a mutual respect, something that was clearly missing between Anderson and the coach he inherited when he took the job.

Graham, a Mesquite, Texas, native who played football at East Central University in Ada, Okla., is known for his spasming stream-of-consciousness delivery that often resembles a used-car salesman. Anderson went to Stanford and Harvard Law School. He's affable but polished and calculating. He repeatedly uses the term "very/quite frankly" when he's working a point that he wants you to retain.

While they were a mismatched pair from the beginning, their relationship could remain satisfactory when Graham was winning 10 games, as he did during Anderson's first year in Tempe. Things turned prickly, however, when Graham repeatedly talked about winning national championships before the 2015 season and finished 6–7.

"One of the things, very frankly, that we're trying to do better around here is to talk less and deliver more," Anderson told a Phoenix radio station in July 2016. "We'll be a minimum on the bravado and all the predictions about greatness and just let our play speak for us."

It didn't, at least not in a good way. Arizona State went 5–7 in 2016 — 2–7 in Pac-12 play — and Graham's seat became decidedly hot. Anderson doesn't hesitate when asked when things went south for Graham.

Anderson's mind started to boil, he says, after arch-rival Arizona racked up a school-record 511 yards rushing in a 56–35 victory over the Sun Devils to conclude that 2016 campaign.

"It was the worst, [most] non-competitive performance that I — most people I talked to — had ever seen coming out of an Arizona State football team," Anderson says. "They didn't have to attempt a single pass in the second half, and they totally embarrassed us and outplayed us in every single way."

While he won't admit to thinking about Edwards as a replacement at that point, he does point to a blowout loss to USC in October as when his mind was made up that a change would be needed.

Says Anderson: "It was in that period of time that I go, 'You know. I've seen this movie a whole bunch. Is it ever going to change?' I didn't believe it was going to change. That's when I started thinking about the candidates and if Herm was a viable candidate."

What Anderson prioritized above all else was recruiting. He says Graham's recruiting was "inefficient, so disorganized, so dysfunctional." His next coach needed to showcase charisma that filled up a living room and made Alabama, Ohio State and USC and their traditions feel like old news.

The cynical way to look at Anderson hiring Edwards is to see two buddies in their mid-60s looking to swerve toward retirement with a final two-minute possession. Instead of getting a suite at the Bellagio for a long weekend of gambling and golf, they decided to collaborate on building a football program — one that has long been termed "a sleeping giant" — into a West Coast power.

For Anderson, his closeness with Edwards isn't about hiring a buddy. It's about truly knowing the man and his skill set. And that skill set, Anderson believes, will transform the Sun Devils' mediocre recruiting. Anderson sees Edwards' passion, integrity, contagious enthusiasm and NFL pedigree as transformative for the Sun Devils' annual inability to consistently land four- and five-star recruits.

"Quite frankly, 70 percent of the success of a college coach is based on your ability to recruit," Anderson says. "I know Herman can deliver that. One thing I know about Herman is that he will be able to talk to parents and articulate the vision of what he wants to accomplish as a head coach within this institution."

There was no dramatic climb up the recruiting rankings during Edwards' first, albeit abbreviated, recruiting cycle. While there was a fairly strong finish, and the Sun Devils collected transfers from Stanford (Casey Tucker) and USC (Roy Hemsley), which should bolster the offensive line, they finished ranked 36th in the 247Sports Composite team rankings.

Arizona State has long labored in Pac-10/12 mediocrity, both on the field and in recruiting. It's 1–1 in Rose Bowl appearances, beating Michigan in 1987 and seeing an undefeated campaign and national title hopes end in 1997 against Ohio State. The Sun Devils are 45–46 in conference play since 2008 and 8–26 against ranked foes during the same span. Their recruiting rankings rarely have entered the top 20.

Where previous coaches failed to land big-time talent, Anderson believes Edwards will succeed. Edwards as a wild-card hire also offers an alternative to merely bringing in another good but not great mid-major head coach — see Graham — or elevating the latest hot but unproven coordinator.

"We've never been able to get [top recruits] because we haven't been organized and focused enough to know what we're looking for," Anderson says. "We haven't spent enough time studying that and then being able to sell that."

Much was made in the media about the awkward roll-out following the announcement of Edwards' hiring. For one, there was Edwards' current agent, Phil de Picciotto, being invited to the press conference to sell his client to an uncertain fan base, a dubious strategy because de Picciotto is the least objective Edwards observer alive. No slight to him, as that's his job.

Then there was Edwards interrupting a longtime reporter for "Devils Digest," which covers the program for the Rivals network, with, "'Devils Digest?' I'm Catholic now, I'm Christian, watch out for them Devils. I'm just saying. We're good, brother, we're good. I ain't taking it personal."

More substantively, there was an odd,

Puzzling Coaching Hires

The hires on this list started off with a rickety foundation that ranged from "maybe not" to "no way this works."



1 **Gerry Faust**, *Notre Dame (1981-85)*
Faust built a high school dynasty from 1962-80 at Archbishop Moeller in Cincinnati. Some called it "The Bold Experiment," handing a high school coach college football's most celebrated program. It was, however, a disaster from the start, and Faust was let go after compiling a 30–26–1 record in five seasons.

2 **Mike Price**, *Alabama (December 2002-May 2003)*
The affable Price never coached a game for the Tide, as a golf tournament in Pensacola, Fla., degenerated into a public scandal featuring a booze-filled evening with strippers. It was a peculiar hire that quickly became a massive embarrassment.



3 **Lane Kiffin, Derek Dooley**, *Tennessee (2009-12)*
Kiffin showed up in Knoxville running his mouth, and after a lackluster 7–6 season bolted for USC in January 2010. Dooley was coming off a 4–8 season at Louisiana Tech. After three consecutive losing seasons, he ended up with the worst record in school history among head coaches with more than two seasons.

4 **Rich Rodriguez**, *Michigan (2008-10)*
There is something to be said for "fit." This marriage was a mismatch from the beginning, and it didn't help that former coach Lloyd Carr opposed Rodriguez's hiring and worked against him behind the scenes from the get-go.





5 **Charlie Weis**, *Kansas (2012-14)*
The Kansas job requires a young, innovative optimist, not a fading grump. In light of that, Weis was a baffling hire and obviously terrible fit. He went 6–22 (.214) and pretty much enraged everybody around the program with his "Not my fault" excuses and carping.

6 **Bill Callahan**, *Nebraska (2004-07)*
Also from the "Just doesn't fit the culture" file, Callahan was a long-time NFL coach taking over a meat-and-potatoes college program. He went 5–6 in year one and finished with a tepid 27–22 record.

7 **Ted Tollner**, *USC (1983-86)*
Tollner was hired to lead the West Coast's premier program after just a single year as the Trojans offensive coordinator under John Robinson. He'd never before been a head coach. Though he led USC to a Rose Bowl, his 26–20–1 record tells a story of mediocrity.



8 **Will Muschamp**, *South Carolina (2016-present)*
Sometimes a puzzling hire ... might just work out? Fact is, Muschamp's hiring to replace Steve Spurrier seemed completely uninspired. Yet after a solid 9–4 season, some naysayers are yaysaying.

9 **Ed Orgeron**, *LSU (2017-present)*
While Orgeron is a great recruiter and good guy to fire up a locker room, his temperament doesn't suggest head coach, nor does his résumé. His hiring in 2016 was mostly an act of desperation, and he sits on perhaps the hottest seat in the SEC this fall.

10 **Ron Zook**, *Florida (2002-04)*
Zook, with zero head-coaching experience, arrived as a letdown and a head scratcher in the wake of the Steve Spurrier era. He didn't do much to change that perception over three mediocre (for Florida) seasons.

BONUS



Pete Carroll, *USC (2001-09)*
Sometimes so-called pundits bomb in their evaluations. Carroll was mocked as a failed NFL coach with almost no college experience — sound familiar, Arizona State? — but it took him just one season to find his rhythm and build a national dynasty before heading off to win a Super Bowl with the Seattle Seahawks.

breathless press release that appeared to claim Arizona State's hiring of Edwards would be paired with a dynamic new organizational model that would revolutionize college football.

As the release said: "This structure will allow the department to form a multi-layered method to the talent evaluation and recruiting processes, increase its emphasis on both student-athlete and coach development and retention, and provide a boost in resource allocation and generation."

Huh?

Questions asking for specifics yielded little substance, though it's clear that Arizona State pushes an admirable focus on academic support, what it calls, "Championship Life." But there is no secret sauce, no fantastic new proprietary model.

The crux on the football side of things is an emphasis on, yes, recruiting, which is portrayed as a more NFL-esque method of evaluation.

Both Edwards and Anderson are aligned in believing that football players should hit physical marks in terms of size, weight and speed by position. What this comes down to is a de-emphasis on scrappy, short players and an aggressive pursuit of "length" at every position.

This is hardly revolutionary. In fact, it is exactly what Chip Kelly emphasized when he transformed Oregon from top-25 team with a fancy scheme to an annual national title contender filled with NFL prospects who looked like NBA power forwards.

Further, part of the initial selling point was that Edwards planned to retain much of Graham's coaching staff in order to ensure continuity, most particularly offensive coordinator Billy Napier.

"[Quarterback] Manny Wilkins does not need a fourth coordinator in four years," Anderson said at the press conference announcing Graham's termination.

But then Napier became Louisiana's head coach, and Wilkins ended up with his fourth play caller in four years, though Rob Likens was promoted from co-offensive coordinator.

"It's hard to trust when people just come and go in your life," says Wilkins, who admits to being a bit jaded by the business end of college football. "Questions arise any time you get anybody new. Everybody was wondering what's it going to be like [under Edwards]. We found out quick the energy he brings to the table and how much the game means to him. You could see how excited he was to be back in coaching."

As far as scheme, Edwards says things are going to slow down on offense, particularly in terms of limiting the other team's possessions. Yes, as he noted at his introductory news conference, he really likes huddles. He wants the quarterback under center more, too. He wants a big, physical offensive line to lead a smash-mouth attack. He wants his running backs to catch the ball more. He likes a controlled passing game that stays in front of the chains.

Says Edwards, "I told Likens when he took the job, 'Hey, when it's third-and-1, please tell me we're not throwing a pass.'"

On defense, Edwards brought in Danny Gonzales, a Rocky Long protégé from San Diego State, to replace Phil Bennett. Gonzales will adapt his own brand of a 3-3-5. Edwards says he wants to be aggressive with stunts and QB pressure but also admitted concerns about the Sun Devils secondary, which has struggled in recent years.

Unlike a lot of coaches, Edwards seems eager to engage over X's and O's. In fact, he insists that his time away from the sidelines broadened his football knowledge, while coaching prep all-stars in the Under Armour game kept him hip to what motivates young people.

"[Time off] is the best thing for you," he says. "I'd tell coaches that sometimes you need to get away from it just to kind of get the bird's-eye view."

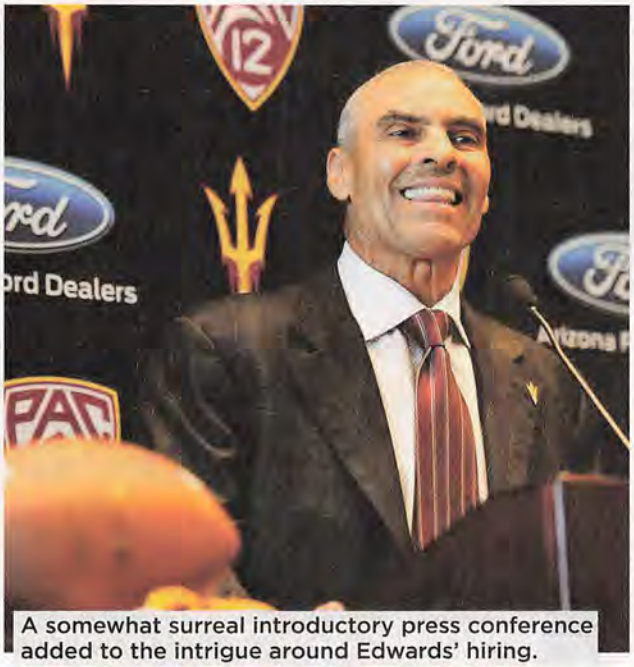
One of Edwards' close football friends and mentors knows a little bit about taking an extended time away from coaching. Dick Vermeil also knows a thing or two about overcoming initial skepticism about making a comeback. Vermeil coached the Philadelphia Eagles from 1976-82, leading them, including Edwards, to Super Bowl XV, but he resigned after the 1982 season, citing burnout. After a long run in broadcasting, he returned to the sidelines in 1997 as the St. Louis Rams head coach. After two terrible seasons, he led the Rams to a victory in Super Bowl XXXIV in January 2000.

Vermeil echoes Edwards, saying his years observing the game as a color commentator helped him when he returned to coaching. His was one of the first calls Edwards took when he accepted Arizona State's offer.

"The players who play for him are going to be privileged to get a different level of leadership than they'd normally get at a Division I situation," Vermeil says. "Herman is going to coach the entire person. Whether they win or lose, they will be better people and probably better players."

Another comparison Sun Devils fans will like: Pete Carroll. When Carroll was hired at USC in 2000, it was a last resort after then-athletic director Mike Garrett was turned down by Mike Riley, Dennis Erickson and Mike Bellotti.

This was the lead for the Associated Press story: "Pete Carroll, fired from his two NFL coaching jobs and out of college football for 17 years, was hired today to succeed Paul Hackett as coach at Southern California."



A somewhat surreal introductory press conference added to the intrigue around Edwards' hiring.

The Carroll-USC marriage turned out pretty well, falling just short of three consecutive national titles amid a run of Pac-10 and recruiting dominance.

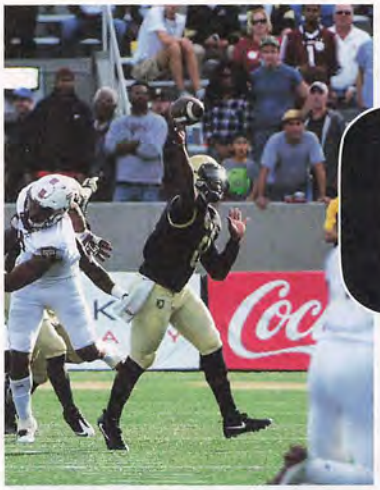
So the reaction ranging from skeptical to mocking is nothing new. Of course, USC is one thing. It's a perennial national power situated smack in the middle of a target-rich recruiting region. Arizona State is an entirely different program.

Edwards is energized, though. Not by the critics, nor the doubters. By the challenge.

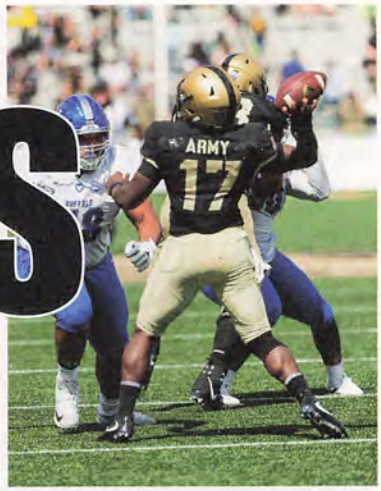
"There are two types of people who will sit in the leadership seat," he says "There's one that will coach or teach by their seat. Or they will teach with their feet. I teach with my feet. I'm everywhere."

He then delivers one last slap to the table.

Callahan: Larry W. Smith; Pete Carroll: Peter Brouillet; Rodriguez: Al Goldis; Kiffin: Brad Schloss; Weis: Peter G. Aiken; Muschamp: Paul Abell; Edwards: Arizona State Athletics



13 GAMES 20 COMPLETIONS



AN ORAL HISTORY OF ARMY'S 20 COMPLETED PASSES IN 2017

By Steven Godfrey

Army does not pass the football very much. Almost never, in fact.

You will pass the ball more playing pickup football with your family on Thanksgiving, and you will likely complete more passes.

This doesn't faze Army, winner of 10 games and the coveted Commander-in-Chief's Trophy in 2017. The Black Knights, who skillfully operate the triple option, ranked dead last nationally in every major passing stat in 2017 — yards per game (27.8), attempts per game (5.0) and total passing yards (361).

Army's 361 total passing yards for their entire 13-game season were fewer than what the top three passing teams in the nation — Oklahoma State, Washington State and Oklahoma — averaged per game.

The advantage to rarely passing (the Black Knights had four games in which they failed to complete a single pass) is that every reception is a cause for celebration. Army offensive coordinator Brent Davis and starting quarterback Ahmad Bradshaw can recall every single one of the Knights' 20 total completions in 2017 from memory.

Here is an oral history of Army's 20 completed passes in 2017, including eight — eight!!! — against Temple. You could say the guys from West Point turned into an Air Raid in that come-from-behind OT win.

"Yeah, I'm not really sure if I'd ever call us an Air Raid," Davis says.

GAME 2, VS. BUFFALO

18-yard completion from Ahmad Bradshaw to Jordan Asberry [1st Q, first-and-10 at Army 33]

DAVIS: That was our first of the year? I do remember it, actually. I know it was a wheel route and Jordan was caught from behind, but I can't recall the formation. And I remember it could've been a touchdown, but it was a bit underthrown.

BRADSHAW: I've seen teams before where when you watch them on film, they won't even look at our receivers. Their corners and safeties won't even look at them, they'll just go straight for the dive [play]. They won't even play the pass.

(-1)-yard completion from Bradshaw to Calen Hart [1st Q, third-and-9 at Army 42]

DAVIS: Any time our offense completes a pass for negative yardage, we've failed to execute. That's on us.

GAME 3, AT OHIO STATE

9-yard completion from Bradshaw to Zach Saum [2nd Q, second-and-8 at Army 43]

BRADSHAW: It was across the middle and Zach was rolling out. He made a great catch.

10-yard completion from Bradshaw to Kell Walker [4th Q, third-and-12 at OSU 40]

DAVIS: The first pass was a bootleg, but what I remember most is the chances we missed against Ohio State. We had some. Late in the game we had a wheel route that should've been a touchdown; their safety just made a great play.

GAME 5, VS. UTEP

42-yard completion from Bradshaw to Jordan Asberry, Touchdown [3rd Q, second-and-9 at UTEP 42]

DAVIS: We were in an unbalanced trips formation, and we faked the toss to the B-back. Jordan Asberry was playing a position he doesn't normally play; he was split out as the No. 1 receiver and ran a post, and man, he was wide open.

That was a play where we hadn't shown the formation at all to that point, then earlier in the game we ran the play as a toss to the B-back to set it up. The toss play gained us 8 or 10 yards, so the next time we came out, on this play, in the same formation, they were looking for the toss.

Then we came out the next time and threw it to Jordan on the play action. We cleared the free safety out and we had 2-on-1 on the corner and the post was wide open.

BRADSHAW: My first touchdown pass of the season. We'd worked it a few times in practice and I'd overthrown him. I just remember "You can't overthrow this, whatever you do don't overthrow it." So the coaches said it looked like a punt because I kind of lofted it, that Jordan should've fair-caught it.



14-yard completion from Bradshaw to Jermaine Adams [3rd Q, third-and-12 at Army 7]

DAVIS: We don't get in third-and-10-plus that often, so that was a specific call for that down-and-distance situation. It was a scheme we planned on using more in the year, but we hadn't much to that point because we'd been able to stay on schedule. The play was a sprint-out pass to Adams. Ahmad set it up well in the pocket.

BRADSHAW: This is one of my favorite calls, a rollout with a trips formation. I completed it in practice all the time so I knew Jermaine would catch it.

24-yard completion from Bradshaw to Jeff Ejekam [4th Q, first-and-10 at UTEP 41]

DAVIS: I'm almost positive that was a bootleg — Ahmad hit Jeff on a corner route and he had to adjust back to the ball and he caught it. Jeff made a really nice play. In two years, Ejekam caught every single ball we threw to him with the exception of one.

BRADSHAW: I remember Jeff being super hype for this because their DBs were talking a lot before the game. A lot of teams try to pressure us into throwing the ball. They said they'd be shutting him down, he wouldn't be catching anything.

GAME 6, AT RICE

9-yard completion from Kelvin Hopkins to Kjetil Cline [4th Q, first-and-10 at Army 25]

DAVIS: We had a big lead. It was [Hopkins'] first play in the game, and we wanted to work on his passing because if Kelvin was ever our quarterback full time, he was going to throw the ball more. We wanted to open with a pass, and he threw a hitch to the left to the backside of a trips formation.

GAME 8, VS. TEMPLE

24-yard completion from Bradshaw to Jeff Ejekam [2nd Q, first-and-10 at Temple 28]

BRADSHAW: What I remember is that their defense was really, really good. And I remember their DBs getting a little relaxed as the game went on. I remember thinking, "Man, they don't know what's coming."

DAVIS: We knew they'd be keyed up to stop us in the red zone on the first play. We felt like we could do something. It was a drag route — they're fast and they react really quickly. Their linebackers are fast-flow guys, so he came right behind the linebackers off the fake and we hit and there wasn't anyone there.

That was a crossing route on the boot, he ran a 10-yard cross route and Jeff was wide open, going from right to left.



*"Our receivers at Army are really special. **They're really talented, but they're really selfless.** They take pride in buying in to this offense and blocking. They get hyped. So when those guys do make a play and show everyone what they're capable of, after hearing all about what they supposedly can't do, it's great."*

— QB Ahmad Bradshaw

Photos: Mark Halmet, Mark Wellbun and USMA Athletics

18-yard completion from Bradshaw to Jordan Asberry [2nd Q, second-and-7 at Army 28]

DAVIS: That was one we checked to a pass from a run, right in the middle of the cadence. Believe it or not, we actually do check to a pass sometimes. That could've been a touchdown if we hit Jordan in stride, but Temple's pretty fast, and they caught up to him.

Ahmad hit Jordan on a post-wheel route combo, and that was a check by Ahmad, which was a great check. We had worked all week on that.



32-yard completion from Bradshaw to Kell Walker [4th Q, second-and-14 at Army 16]

BRADSHAW: That was my second-favorite pass of the year, because it kind of broke down. I wasn't throwing the ball to Kell, the pass was for John Trainor. Kell just got in the way and intercepted it. It was a mess that turned into a miracle.

15-yard completion from Hopkins to John Trainor [4th Q, third-and-15 at Army 27]

DAVIS: What I remember most about the Temple game is Hopkins just really, really being on point in the second half. We put Kelvin in the first time in the second quarter — he had Jermaine Adams wide open on a post corner route and overthrew him by 8 yards. Coach [Jeff] Monken read him the riot act at halftime, as well as [quarterbacks coach] Mitch Ware.

He came back after missing that pass that badly and was really accurate on that drive. It was awesome.

BRADSHAW: We all compete in practice for the one-minute drill job, and Kel [Hopkins] had performed the best. He was our one-minute quarterback. We knew he was going in. We'd practiced all those situations, all those combinations we used.

6-yard completion from Hopkins to Kell Walker [4th Q, second-and-4 at Army 48]

DAVIS: At this point [Hopkins has] calmed down, he's doing what we've known he could do in practice. This is why he won the job for the one-minute drills. To stand up in the pressure of that moment after struggling, it was a great moment. Coaches love those moments.

21-yard completion from Hopkins to Kell Walker [4th Q, third-and-10 at Temple 46]

DAVIS: He threw this ball to Kell Walker over the middle and it was right behind the linebacker's ear and between the deep safety.

He bent it over the middle. If it's a foot left or right it's incomplete and he nailed it. He threw it into a coke bottle.

9-yard completion from Hopkins to Jermaine Adams [4th Q, second-and-10 at Temple 25]

DAVIS: [Hopkins] threw to the sideline to Jermaine, and Jermaine kept his toes in bounds to make a great catch.

16-yard completion from Hopkins to Jermaine Adams, Touchdown [4th Q, third-and-1 at Temple 16]

BRADSHAW: This was my favorite pass of the year. I rarely ever get to be looking at the game from the sideline and it was interesting to see all the work we put in paying off. We'd done that drill every day and it was the same scenario in practice.

DAVIS: We actually designed the play to go to Kell Walker over the middle. Kell was wide open, but they brought one more than we could block and so he had to throw it off his back foot and went to the outside receiver, Adams. We were in a doubles formation, standard spread, and he threw it to the X instead of going to Kell because if he'd held on to it he might not have gotten it off.

That was the only time they blitzed us on the whole drive. So it was straight man coverage and the ball went exactly where we needed it to.

That defense, I've got a lot of respect for Geoff Collins as a coach, that game and that situation was probably the most improbable win we had. At least in terms of those percentages of outcome that ESPN has, when we got the ball back it would've been pretty low.

We protected better than we thought against that level of pass rushers. That was a huge confidence boost for our team.

GAME 10, VS. DUKE

42-yard completion from Bradshaw to Kell Walker [2nd Q, third-and-9 at Army 37]

DAVIS: I definitely remember that one because it was the only one we had a chance to hit. Duke really does a great job with their defense.

We were worried if we put Kell in the game and lined Ahmad up in shotgun they'd blitz us and we might not be able to pick it up. So we put Ahmad under center to give us a base call. We had a good play schematically — it's a gap protection, so we could pick up a linebacker if they sent one.

The call was 81 Duck Squirrel: We faked the toss and we booted [bootlegged] out towards the field, faked throwing downfield and then threw it back to where we initially faked the toss. That was a big play in the game to get us field position.

BOUND TO THE GROUND

Army ranked 130th — also known as last — in the nation in the following passing categories. For context, we have listed the team that ranked next to last nationally in each category.

	Army	No. 129
Completions	20	42
Attempts	65	102
Completion%	30.8	36.1
Touchdowns	2	6
Yards per game	27.8	77.8

In the stat that matters the most, however, Army was one of only 26 teams in college football to win at least 10 games in 2017.

USMA Athletics

GAME 11, AT NORTH TEXAS

27-yard completion from Bradshaw to John Trainor [4th Q, third-and-6 at North Texas 29]

DAVIS: That was huge. We had to score, that was the same exact play we hit the year before against those guys in the bowl game. It was a vertical route by John; he ran a great route and it was a great throw. At that point we had to have that play to stay in the game. We ultimately lost the game but that pass kept us on pace with them.

BRADSHAW: They were another team that completely disregarded the pass. We noticed, and lo and behold, the safety didn't pay any attention to the slot, which was John.

Our receivers at Army are really special. They're really talented, but they're really selfless. They take pride in buying in to this offense and blocking. They get hyped. So when those guys do make a play and show everyone what they're capable of, after hearing all about what they supposedly can't do, it's great.



GAME 12, VS. NAVY

20-yard completion from Bradshaw to Calen Holt [3rd Q, third-and-7 at Army 23]

DAVIS: That play stands out because it's Navy, but it really stands out because we probably threw it 20-25 times in practice just to run the play one time in a game. We worked on that play for three weeks.

We'd shown so much of a certain formation all year — split zone with both backs inserting. We felt good just on the fact that we had shown that look out of our backfield so many times, probably 20 times vs. Air Force alone.

I knew [Navy] would be keying that split zone play, so we showed it to them early, maybe five times before we passed. Once we saw it, we felt confident [the pass] would be open. It was just a matter of when we'd use it in the game.

I didn't know we were going to use it on a third-and-7, because at that down and distance we're just as likely to run it with Ahmad in there. But I thought that was as good a pass as we had.

We knew the safeties would be very active and [Holt] just ran right by the safety. The pass was short in those conditions [heavy snow] and Calen made an unbelievable play coming back for it. Caught it off the snow, you could say.

BRADSHAW: That was my third-favorite pass of the year. That play in particular, we can't run it at all if both of their linebackers blitz. So the coaches are telling me, "If you see any linebacker inching up or showing blitz, call it off."

So I broke the huddle, got out there and looked and it's five defensive linemen on our five O-linemen, and two inside linebackers. It's seven against our five and if either linebacker blitzes it breaks the play.

And they both blitzed. I just remember thinking, "Oh, this is not good." I'm supposed to check out if they show blitz, but they didn't blitz until after the ball was hiked.

By the time I got the snap all I could think was, "Get rid of it or get out [of the pocket]." Then I just remember Calen making an amazing catch. I have no idea how. I threw it off my back foot and the ball was freezing. He had to stop and go back to catch it. If I would've got it to him early he might've scored.

GAME 13, VS. SAN DIEGO STATE

6-yard completion from Bradshaw to Cam Harrison [3rd Q, third-and-5 at Army 30]

DAVIS: Cam Harrison's only catch so far. I just remember thinking that we had to score. I really felt strongly that if we stayed on schedule and didn't have negative yardage plays, that we'd be in good shape. In 91 snaps we had two negative yards plays all day, maybe three?

Their defense gave us a bunch of looks. We had to simplify our plan to have good play calls. They gave us like 15 different calls in the first half. You don't normally see that against our offense.

Part of the reason we didn't pass is that we didn't get set off schedule much in the game. I remember thinking, "Just don't call something that will screw us up for minus-5," or something. Our job as coaches is to not call something that puts them in a bad situation.

And we were playing very physical in that game; that was our season high in knockdowns. We knocked 170 guys down that day. That's a lot. In 91 snaps, that's a lot of people. With our guys being that physical we just really played well, and we felt really confident.

We may not have led the country in scoring, but if you look at points per possession I think we were third in the nation. To me that's the most important stat offensively, because that's relative to how many snaps your defense is playing. That's helping your team.

If we shorten the game down to where there's only seven possessions a game and we score on five of them, we're pretty hard to beat.



A Five-Year War

The twilight of Nick Saban's Alabama career could be marked by a challenge to the Tide dynasty from Kirby Smart and resurgent Georgia

By Matt Hinton

As Southern-fried college football rivalries go, Alabama-Georgia doesn't quite evoke the kind of heat that radiates from the region's more storied hate-fests, and if you're going strictly by the records, it's debatable these days whether Tide-Dawgs really qualifies as a "rivalry" at all. In the 26 years since the SEC split into two divisions, the neighbors have met only nine times, once in the SEC title game. And like just about everything else over the past decade, when they have met, the series has been dominated by the Tide: Alabama has taken four straight over Georgia dating back to 2008 — all of them, in one way or another, in soul-crushing fashion.

From Georgia's perspective, in fact, success (or lack thereof) has been increasingly defined by life on the other side of the fence. More than anything else, it was arguably the failure to measure up to Bama's domineering standards that finally doomed Mark Richt, a widely respected coach whose fate was more or less sealed in a blowout loss to the Tide in 2015, a loss that convinced the Bulldogs to poach long-time Alabama assistant Kirby Smart to take his place. Two years later, Smart's record against his old team stands at 0–1.

In context, however, that one loss looks much more like a glimpse of a bright future than the latest mark on an underachieving past. As deflating as Georgia's skin-of-the-teeth, overtime loss in January's National Championship Game felt in the moment, it was unmistakably a collision of equals. More than equals, actually; more like mirror images. The big-picture takeaway was also obvious: Smart's Bulldogs had arrived, fully formed, as a kind of identical sibling to Nick Saban's Crimson juggernaut. Whatever gap still existed between the two sides had been effectively reduced — after 60-plus minutes and a desperate quarterback change by Saban, who for the first time in his life seemed relieved by victory — to one play, a coin flip on the sport's biggest stage.

Round 1 came up Bama; officially, Round 2 isn't scheduled until the next regular-season Tide-Dawgs tilt in 2020. But if the game and the season that preceded Tua Tagovailoa's winning OT heave were any indication, it's not going to take nearly that long. It was only the opening salvo in a border war that stands to define the SEC, and potentially college football as a whole, for the foreseeable future.

It seems so inevitable now, in hindsight. But it's worth remembering that when Georgia hired Smart as its new head coach, in December 2015, it looked more like an audacious gamble, one that was as likely to blow up in UGA's face as it was to pay off in an imminent playoff run. For one thing, it wasn't obvious that the Bulldogs would necessarily be better off with Smart, a first-time head coach, than they'd been under Richt, owner of the best career winning percentage at Georgia since the Great Depression. At 39, Smart was younger at the time than any of the SEC's incumbent head coaches. And it's not like hiring a Saban protégé to reverse-engineer the Alabama Death Star was some kind of novel idea: Tennessee and Florida had both gone that route — twice, in the Gators' case — and wound up regretting it. After Smart's uninspiring 8–5 debut in 2016, there was an even chance Georgia would, too, accompanied by a helping of humble pie.

Instead, the gamble has already begun to pay off in spades, more quickly than even the early believers could have predicted. Even the initial setback can be retrofitted to fit snugly within the larger narrative: After all, Saban's 2007 debut in Tuscaloosa was even worse, a 7–6 slog that gave no indication that the same team would emerge as a fully operational juggernaut in Year 2 en route to a national championship in Year 3. So far, Smart is almost eerily on schedule.

Smart: Paul Abell; Saban: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Hayes and Schembechler: AP; Smart and Saban: Getty Images

Even more striking than the timing, though, is the product itself, where the full extent of Smart's influence (and, by extension, Saban's) was obvious and uncanny. By midseason, it was inescapable just how much Smart's new team really did look like his old one, athletically and philosophically, effectively mirroring the standard Saban outfit right down to the fact that Georgia's star quarterback, Jake Fromm, was once committed to play for the Crimson Tide.

Under different circumstances, the Bulldogs ascension might sound like too much too soon for a program that's managed only one year of championship-level success — a relatively out-of-the-blue one, at that — and which lost more than a dozen veteran starters from that team, almost all of them draft picks. After all, LSU, Auburn and Florida have had their turns in the championship circle in the past decade, too, without coming close to challenging Alabama's long-term dominance for more than a year or two at a time.

> As deflating as Georgia's skin-of-the-teeth, overtime loss in January's National Championship Game felt in the moment, it was unmistakably a collision of equals. ***More than equals, actually; more like mirror images.***

The timing of the Bulldogs' on-field arrival was perfect, given that it was preceded by a surge on the recruiting trail that only picked up steam as the new administration began to deliver tangible results. The 2017 signing class, the first at Georgia assembled entirely on Smart's watch, ranked third nationally according to the 247Sports Composite rankings and has already produced a trio of budding offensive stars in Fromm, offensive tackle Andrew Thomas and tailback D'Andre Swift, a dark-horse Heisman candidate this fall after serving as an understudy to NFL-bound seniors Nick Chubb and Sony Michel.

This year's class achieved the near impossible, supplanting Alabama atop 247's national rankings for the first time since 2010, and will arrive on campus as one of the most decorated recruiting hauls in recent memory. The incoming crop includes seven prospects with five-star grades according to 247, a record number, plus five more ranked among the top-100 players overall. Aside from Bama, no other SEC team currently has more than four five-star players on its entire roster.

For one more year, at least, it's still the case that the majority of Georgia's frontline starters were recruited to Athens by Richt, whose classes almost always rated highly in their own right. The holdovers laid the foundation for the program's return to the national spotlight. But with that foundation in place, the expectations for the younger half of the roster coming up behind them are as high as for any group of players in school history.

The most famous coaching rivalry in college football, the "Ten Year War" between Ohio State's Woody Hayes and his former assistant, Michigan's Bo Schembechler, was waged from 1969-78. Schembechler edged his old boss, five wins to four, with one tie in 1973 that cost both teams a shot at the then-mythical national championship — and the winner claimed the Big Ten crown every single year. In the 21st Century, the notion of the same two coaches surviving a full decade at the helm of the same two annual contenders, at the same time, is almost quaint. Bob Stoops and Mack Brown had their run in the Oklahoma-Texas series, and … that's about it. In the SEC, Saban has outlasted too many rival head coaches to count, many of whom were put out to pasture specifically for not being Saban-esque enough.

At 66, with six national titles to his credit and nothing left to accomplish, it's hard to imagine Saban grinding through the end of a second decade at Alabama in the mid-2020s.

Until proven otherwise, though, it's just as hard to imagine the Crimson Tide fading from national relevance anytime soon, either. Although the 2020 game in Tuscaloosa is the only regular-season meeting on deck until at least 2025, Georgia's rapid ascendancy under Smart may be the last, best opportunity to spawn something like a sustained Bo-Woody dynamic in the SEC — a Five-Year War — before Saban calls it a career. The East, with Florida and Tennessee hitting reset in the wake of historic collapses, is as ripe for the taking as it has ever been. The West, while significantly more competitive, remains Alabama's domain. Right up to the end, nearly all of last season felt like the prelude to an inevitable Bama-Georgia collision in Atlanta, and the fact that it came a month later than expected didn't diminish the intensity or the anticipation when it finally did arrive.

This season, they're runaway favorites to be back there, in December this time but with immediate national implications. Beyond that, there's no reason to believe that Tide-Dawgs for all the SEC marbles can't become an annual rite.

Of course, Auburn plans to have its say in the matter again after unexpectedly delaying last year's battle of the titans, and Florida, Tennessee and Texas A&M all expect their investment in expensive new head coaches to begin paying off in Smart-like fashion sooner than later. Trajectories and narratives and all the assumptions that come with them can change very quickly. But the window is as wide open for Georgia now as it's been for any of the other would-be threats to Bama's throne at any point in the Saban era, and the Bulldogs are ideally positioned to make good.

How fitting it would be if the Tide's most worthy rival finally turned out to be the one built most thoroughly in its own image.



Kirby Smart and Nick Saban could emulate the run of dominance that Bo Schembechler and Woody Hayes enjoyed in the Big Ten decades ago.



Assembly LINE

A dominant defensive front has propelled Clemson to the top of the college football world

By Larry Williams



Once upon a time, in a land that now seems far away, Dabo Swinney was a young and struggling coach whose future seemed to depend on a big hire.

After the Clemson offense bogged down in 2010 during a 6–7 season, the Tigers' first losing mark in 12 years, Swinney decided he needed something new and different. And that's what he found in Chad Morris, who brought from Tulsa an aggressive tempo while spreading the field horizontally and vertically.

A sleek, high-flying offense sounded great and all. But aren't championships won with defense? How could the Tigers possibly field a top-shelf defense with the program's brand so geared to pyrotechnic offense?

Swinney never understood the premise that scoring a bunch of points and playing dominant defense were mutually exclusive notions. And as much as Swinney loves finding ways to move the ball and get to the end zone, he's plenty fanatical about controlling the line of scrimmage on defense and coming up with stops that give the offense more opportunities to put up points.

But a year after the Morris hire, Swinney's alleged devotion to defense was a national punchline after West Virginia hung 70 on Clemson in the Orange Bowl to severely tarnish what had been a successful 2011 season.

Even when he made a move at coordinator, firing Kevin Steele and bringing in Brent Venables from Oklahoma, it was far from a slam dunk. Sooners fans weren't exactly devastated to see Venables go after his defense was subject to some regular Big 12 lashings against high-powered offenses.

This is important foundational context to consider as we attempt to assess the monster that Clemson has become. Elite offensive players made the Tigers really good, but consistently dominant defense — particularly the talent up front — is what has made this program great.

At this point there is no question that Clemson's defensive line ranks among the premier wrecking machines in college football. For four consecutive seasons, the faces have changed, but the Tigers have continued to disrupt and overwhelm the line of scrimmage.

And now, in a development that seems borderline unfair, opposing offensive lines get the fearsome task of facing seniors Christian Wilkins and Austin Bryant, fourth-year junior Clelin Ferrell and junior Dexter Lawrence. Again.

It would have been hard enough for opposing offenses in 2018 had Wilkins and Ferrell done what many expected and turned pro. It actually seemed quite realistic for some time that Bryant would join them in leaving early for the NFL. But while most mock drafts were listing Wilkins and Ferrell as virtual locks as first-round picks, NFL representatives weren't as convinced. The league's advisory committee came back with second-round grades for both of them. Other trusted NFL personnel were telling Clemson's football staff that it might be wise for them to stay another year.

So all three of them returned, based on the hope of becoming sure-fire first-rounders in 2019 and making a lot more money. And soon after their decisions were made, Swinney trashed the national folks whose shock at the decisions was based on the faulty premise that they were first-round locks.

"Bottom line is they didn't get the grade they wanted," he said. "That's one of the problems that we have out there is there's a lot of rhetoric that gets created in that process for these people, whether it's this

Paul Abell

dot-com or this person who is putting out his mock draft and they've got this person at this pick. Well, guess what? That person doesn't own a team. He don't get a pick. And has no influence either. If you're not really educated in the process, you can make some bad decisions based on bad information."

Even if you removed Wilkins, Ferrell and Bryant from the equation, Clemson's 2018 defensive line would've been formidable. Lawrence has shown enough over his first two seasons to warrant forecasts as a possible No. 1 pick. The 2018 signing class included two five-star defensive ends, Xavier Thomas and K.J. Henry. Senior tackle Albert Huggins is a powerful force inside, as is Nyles Pinckney. Redshirt freshman tackle Jordan Williams seems to be a star in the making. The end positions also have returning experience in Richard Yeargin, Chris Register, Justin Foster, Xavier Kelly and Logan Rudolph.

So how did this football program, which since that 70–33 debacle against West Virginia has amassed a national title and a 72–11 record, construct what has become an assembly line of elite defensive linemen?

Clemson's defensive lines were plenty good on a consistent basis under Steele and predecessor Vic Koenning. But Venables began taking things to a new level upon his arrival. After plenty of shaky moments in his first season, a young defensive line started to grow up in the 2012 Chick-fil-A Bowl against LSU. That night in the Georgia Dome, sophomores Grady Jarrett, Vic Beasley, Josh Watson, Corey Crawford and DeShawn Williams frequently overwhelmed a big, physical Bayou Bengals offensive line. Most Clemson fans remember that night for the offensive magic that allowed Clemson to convert a fourth-and-16 on the drive for the winning field goal, but it was also a catalyzing evening for a defensive line that has never been the same since.

Clemson's success has been driven by excellent recruiting, yes. But this story is also heavily rooted in talent identification and development. Jarrett, a three-star prospect according to Rivals, was far from a headliner of the 2011 recruiting class. Beasley came to Clemson as a three-star running back who was later moved to tight end, then to linebacker, and finally to defensive end. Kevin Dodd was a three-star member of the 2011 class and all but forgotten before he blossomed into an elite end as a junior.

Two key figures in this excellent run of development were Dan Brooks and Marion Hobby, who coached the line together for six consecutive years culminating in the 2016 national title — a trophy that came after the defensive line controlled the trenches against Ohio State and Alabama in the College Football Playoff. Brooks, who retired, had a long and distinguished career that included a lengthy stint under Phillip Fulmer at Tennessee. Hobby, who joined the NFL's Jacksonville Jaguars, was a seasoned groomer of defensive ends.

Swinney hired Alabama grad Todd Bates away from Jacksonville State to coach the line by himself in 2017. When the NCAA approved a 10th full-time assistant for staffs this past winter, Swinney promoted defensive analyst Lemanski Hall (his former Crimson Tide teammate) to team with Bates. Hall coaches ends, and Bates oversees the interior.

To those who are familiar with this defensive line group and the bond they share, their decisions to stick around weren't all that surprising. When they're not making life difficult on opposing offensive coordinators, they are savoring the college experience away from the field. Wilkins' longtime love of the Power Rangers led to the 2016 defensive line purchasing replica outfits and showing up at their coaches' homes for Halloween.

"I used to have it all back in the day," Wilkins says. "I had the PJs, the pillowcase, the cover and everything. I was really a big-time Power Rangers fan. ... Every day before practice — that's one of our handshakes — we all morph. We all morph and power up. When the helmet comes on, it's morphin' time. It's time to power up. Every time I get a sack, that's always my sack celebration — I morph. It's something that we kept from last year, and every time a guy leaves, he passes it on to the next ranger."

Swinney's program has amassed a 40–4 record the past three years. This elevated profile has allowed the staff to recruit on a national level, as evidenced by the geographical diversity on the defensive line.

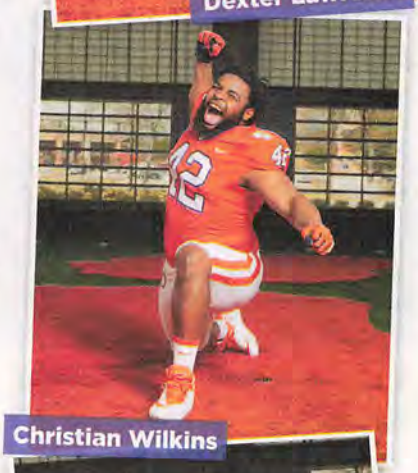
Wilkins, from Springfield, Mass., could've gone anywhere and was interested in Ohio State but fell in love with Clemson. Ferrell is from Richmond and was heavily pursued by Virginia Tech. The Tigers' staff plucked Lawrence from the Raleigh suburbs, right from under the nose of NC State and Dave Doeren. Bryant came to Clemson from deep in South Georgia, not far from Tallahassee. Henry, who announced his pledge to Clemson in December, is from Winston-Salem.

So there's not as much pressure as before to spot the developmental jewels like Jarrett, Dodd or others. Consider this: The 2018 defensive line roster includes four Rivals five-stars and nine four-stars.

Venables will lose a load of that talent after this season. But if recent history has taught us anything, it's that Clemson has a load of talent to replace it.

History has also taught us that Swinney's hunch from years ago was right: It's not that far-fetched at all to pair a high-scoring offense with an asphyxiating defense. In the Upstate of South Carolina, it's a mere fact of blissful life.


Dexter Lawrence

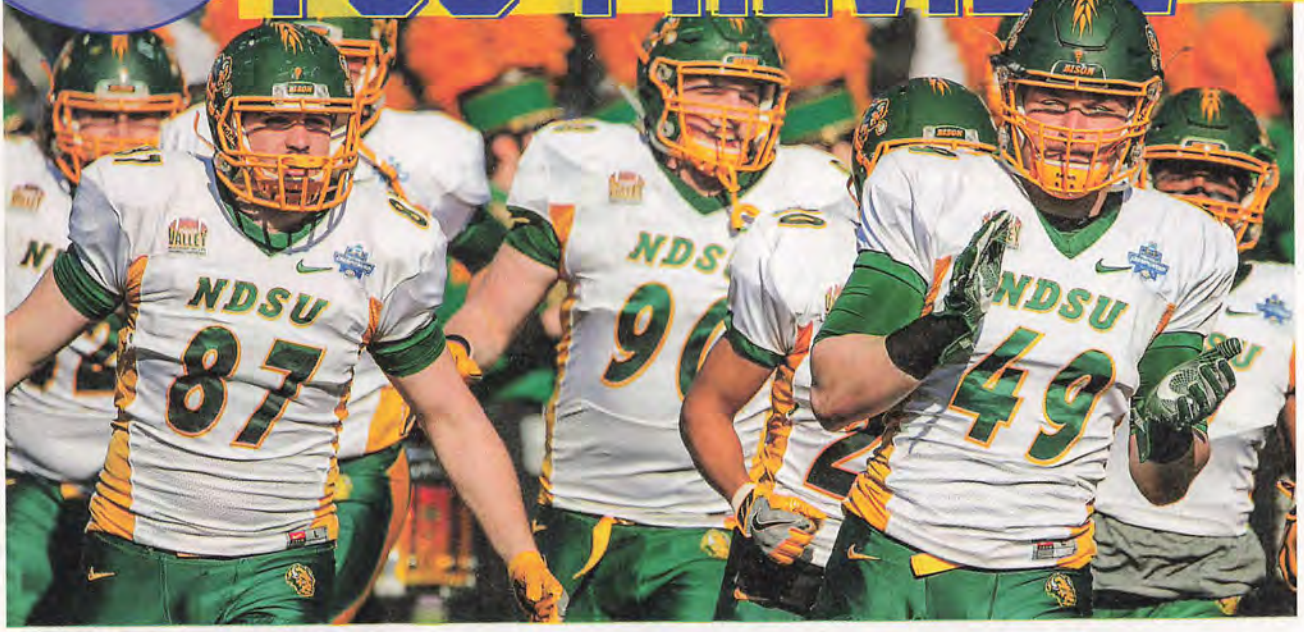

Christian Wilkins


Austin Bryant


Clelin Ferrell

FCS PREVIEW

By Craig Haley



1. NORTH DAKOTA STATE

(14-1, 7-1 Missouri Valley)

The defending FCS champion Bison, winners of six of the last seven national titles, seek to break their tie with Georgia Southern for the most FCS championships of all time. Coach Chris Klieman, who has led the Bison to three of those titles and been a part of all six, brings back seven starters on both sides of the ball as well as All-America defensive end Greg Menard, who missed last season with an ACL tear. The nation's best defense also features sophomore linebacker Jabril Cox and strong safety Robbie Grimsley, who leads a deep and talented secondary. The offense overflows with seniors, led by quarterback Easton Stick, who's 34-3 as a starter in his career, and running backs Bruce Anderson and Lance Dunn, who both could surpass 1,000 rushing yards. The Missouri Valley title race might be a mere formality with the Bison seeking their eighth in a row. Plus, with seven of their 11 regular-season games at the Fargodome, the Bison should gain home-field advantage in the playoffs again. Dynasty, indeed.

2. JAMES MADISON

(14-1, 8-0 CAA)

The 2016 national champ and 2017 runner-up lost more key players in the offseason than North Dakota State, but the Dukes are a clear notch above the next tier of contenders. Whoever takes over at quarterback — likely two-year backup Cole Johnson or Pittsburgh transfer Ben DiNucci — is surrounded by terrific skill players, including running backs Marcus Marshall, Trai Sharp and Cardon Johnson and wide receiver Riley Stapleton. The defense must retool, but it could have the nation's best set of cornerbacks in seniors Jimmy Moreland and Rashad Robinson.

3. NEW HAMPSHIRE

(9-5, 5-3 CAA)

In coach Sean McDonnell's 20th season, the Wildcats expect to make a deep run in what would be their 15th straight playoff appearance. Last year's national quarterfinals team returns 18 starters. QB Trevor Knight (3,433 yards, 26 TDs) has go-to targets in Neil O'Connor (97 receptions, 1,396 yards, 10 TDs) and Malik Love, but the offensive line must do a better job with pass protection. An improved run game will make a difference. The 4-2-5 defense features linebackers Quinlen Dean, the team's leading tackler, and Jared Kuehl, plus cornerback Prince Smith Jr.

MUST-SEE MATCHUPS

Aug. 25	Jacksonville State vs. North Carolina A&T (Montgomery, Ala.)
Sept. 1	Northern Iowa at Montana
Sept. 22	Delaware at North Dakota State
Sept. 22	Sam Houston State at Nicholls
Sept. 29	South Dakota State at North Dakota State
Oct. 13	James Madison at Villanova
Oct. 13	Eastern Washington at Weber State
Nov. 3	James Madison at New Hampshire
Nov. 3	Wofford at Samford
Nov. 17	Jacksonville State vs. Kennesaw State (Atlanta)

AP

4. SOUTH DAKOTA STATE

(11-3, 6-2 Missouri Valley)

While the losses of tight end Dallas Goedert and wide receiver Jake Wieneke are significant, the Jackrabbits, coming off their first run to the national semifinals, remain formidable. As senior quarterback Taryn Christion seeks new targets, coach John Stiegelmeier's team will have a physical run game behind backs Isaac Wallace and Mikey Daniel. The defense will be improved, led by linebacker Christian Rozeboom, the team leader in tackles in each of his first two seasons. The Jackrabbits also boast one of the nation's best placekickers in Chase Vinatieri, the nephew of NFL great Adam Vinatieri.

5. KENNESAW STATE

(12-3, 5-0 Big South)

With most of the key players returning, the fourth-year Big South program could surpass last year's surprising run to the national quarterfinals. Senior quarterback Chandler Burks is the first option (literally) on the nation's No. 1-ranked rushing attack, but running backs Jake McKenzie, Shaquil Terry and Darnell Holland also went over 725 yards. Defensive end Desmond Johnson is a one-man wrecking crew, and linebacker Bryson Armstrong won the Jerry Rice Award as the FCS National Freshman of the Year. The schedule gets much tougher and will include the Owls' two playoff victims, Samford and Jacksonville State.

6. EASTERN WASHINGTON

(7-4, 6-2 Big Sky)

After four finishes in the national top-four rankings from 2012-16, the Eagles were left on the playoff sideline last season. The disappointment motivates second-year coach Aaron Best's team, which is armed with senior quarterback Gage Gubrud, who ranked No. 2 nationally in total offense (357.8 ypg) even in a subpar season. Nsimba Webster is the go-to receiver, and running back Antoine Custer Jr. will keep defenses honest. The team's top five tacklers welcome back defensive tackle Jay-Tee Tiuli from injury.

7. SAM HOUSTON STATE

(12-2, 8-1 Southland)

Two-time Walter Payton Award winner Jeremiah Briscoe is gone, but transfer quarterback Mike Dare steps into an offense that boasts wide receivers Nathan Stewart and Davion Davis, who combined for 150 receptions, 2,854 receiving yards and 31 TD catches last season. Defensive end Chris Stewart also puts up big numbers for a program that's been to five semifinals in the last seven seasons.

FCS ALL-AMERICA TEAM

OFFENSE

QB	Gage Gubrud	6-2/205/Sr.	Eastern Washington
RB	Bruce Anderson	5-11/216/Sr.	North Dakota State
RB	Dom Bragalone	5-11/230/Sr.	Lehigh
FB	Cal Daniels	6-2/255/Sr.	Stony Brook
WR	Keelan Doss	6-3/210/Sr.	UC Davis
WR	Nathan Stewart	5-11/175/Jr.	Sam Houston State
TE	Logan Parker	6-4/250/Sr.	Southern Utah
C	Zach Larsen	6-1/300/Jr.	Southern Utah
OL	Larry Allen III	6-4/285/Sr.	Harvard
OL	B.J. Autry	6-5/340/Sr.	Jacksonville State
OL	Daniel Cooney	6-8/315/Sr.	San Diego
OL	Iosua Opeta	6-4/295/Sr.	Weber State

DEFENSE

DL	Miles Brown	6-2/320/Sr.	Wofford
DL	Andrew Clyde	6-3/275/Sr.	Richmond
DL	Ahmad Gooden	6-1/240/Sr.	Samford
DL	Chris Terrell	6-3/266/Jr.	Central Arkansas
LB	Bryson Armstrong	5-11/205/So.	Kennesaw State
LB	Warren Messer	5-11/230/Sr.	Elon
LB	Christian Rozeboom	6-2/230/Jr.	South Dakota State
DB	Marlon Bridges	6-0/200/Jr.	Jacksonville State
DB	Robbie Grimsley	6-0/191/Sr.	North Dakota State
DB	Rashad Robinson	5-11/182/Sr.	James Madison
DB	Rob Rolle	6-0/185 Sr.	Villanova

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	Lorran Fonseca	5-11/185/Sr.	Nicholls
P	Ian Berryman	6-0/205/Sr.	Western Carolina
KR	Juwan Petit-Frere	5-7/170/Jr.	SE Louisiana
PR	Justice Shelton-Mosley	5-10/195/Sr.	Harvard

PROJECTED PLAYOFF QUALIFIERS

AUSTIN PEAY
(At-Large)

COLGATE
(At-Large)

DUQUESNE
(Northeast Champ)

EASTERN WASHINGTON
(Big Sky Champ)

DELAWARE
(At-Large)

ELON
(At-Large)

ILLINOIS STATE
(At-Large)

JACKSONVILLE STATE
(Ohio Valley Champ)

JAMES MADISON
(CAA Champ)

KENNESAW STATE
(Big South Champ)

MCNEESE
(At-Large)

MONTANA
(At-Large)

NEW HAMPSHIRE
(At-Large)

NICHOLLS
(At-Large)

NORTH DAKOTA STATE
(Missouri Valley Champ)

NORTHERN IOWA
(At-Large)

SAMFORD
(Southern Champ)

SAM HOUSTON STATE
(Southland Champ)

SAN DIEGO
(Pioneer Champ)

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE
(At-Large)

VILLANOVA
(At-Large)

WEBER STATE
(At-Large)

8. JACKSONVILLE STATE

(10-2, 8-0 OVC)

The Gamecocks aren't resting on a 32-game winning streak in the Ohio Valley Conference; they're seeking a sixth consecutive season with at least 10 wins. Coach John Grass has brought in Clemson transfer Zerrick Cooper to battle all-conference quarterback Bryant Horn and keep the offense moving. Plenty was lost defensively, but junior safety Marlon Bridges returns as an anchor.

9. WEBER STATE

(11-3, 7-1 Big Sky)

It will be hard for the Wildcats to improve on their best-ever season, including a near upset of James Madison in the national quarterfinals. With a new quarterback stepping into the huddle, running backs Treshawn Garrett and Kevin Smith and wide receiver Rashid Shaheed will be counted on for big seasons. Linebacker LeGrand Toia and defensive end Adam Rodriguez provide excellent production in the front seven.

10. ELON

(8-4, 6-2 CAA)

After whetting their appetite with a playoff appearance in coach Curt Cignetti's first season, the young Phoenix are all grown up with 18 returning starters. Still, losses in their final three games indicate there's a need for a finishing touch. Quarterback Davis Cheek, the CAA Offensive Freshman of the Year, will spread the ball between running backs Malcolm Summers and De'Sean McNair and wide receiver Kortez Weeks. Linebacker Warren Messer fills the stat sheet.

11. VILLANOVA

(5-6, 3-5 CAA)

Improved health will lead to a much-improved record for the Wildcats. Quarterback Zach Bednarczyk, running back Matt Gudzak, wide receiver Changa Hodge and All-America safety Rob Rolle were among the key players whose seasons were cut short last year. Add in the development of linebacker Jeff Steeb, and coach Mark Ferrante's second season will go more smoothly.



JOE NEWMAN, WOFFORD

12. SAMFORD

(8-4, 6-2 Southern)

Two of the nation's better players, quarterback Devlin Hodges and defensive end Ahmad Gooden, will fuel the Bulldogs. Hodges has racked up 11,005 yards of total offense in his career, while Gooden totaled 15.5 tackles for a loss as a junior. All 11 starters return on offense, and one of them, senior wide receiver Kelvin McKnight, will challenge for 100 receptions.

13. DELAWARE

(7-4, 5-3 CAA)

Mired in a playoff drought since 2010, the Blue Hens' tradition-rich program is anxious for a return following its three-game improvement in coach Danny Rocco's first season. The defense can get it done as it features linebackers Troy Reeder and Charles Bell and safety Nasir Adderley. But the offense remains under the microscope, although returning quarterback J.P. Caruso was 4-2 as a starter.

14. ILLINOIS STATE

(6-5, 4-4 Missouri Valley)

A bounce-back season seems likely for a Redbirds team that fell short of a fourth straight playoff appearance. In the rugged Missouri Valley, senior quarterback Jake Kolbe must play with more consistency, but running backs James Robinson and Markel Smith provide a 1-2 punch. On defense, linebacker Tyree Horton is back as the team's leading tackler.

15. NICHOLLS

(8-4, 7-2 Southland)

Opponents will have a hard time slowing a Colonels offense that features quarterback Chase Fourcade, running back Kyran Irvin and wide receiver Damion Jeanpiere. When they don't reach the end zone, All-America placekicker Lorran Fonseca will pick up the pieces. Defensive linemen Kenny Dotson and Sully Laiche are at the front of what should be a much-improved defense.

16. WOFFORD

(10-3, 7-1 Southern)

Following long-time coach Mike Ayers' retirement, former assistant Josh Conklin, who spent the last three seasons as Pittsburgh's defensive coordinator, has taken the reins. He knows to keep running the triple-option offense, which features quarterback Joe Newman and veteran backs Andre Stoddard, Lennox McAfee and Blake Morgan. Burly defensive lineman Miles Brown (6'2", 320) is a force.

17. MCNEESE

(9-2, 7-2 Southland)

No other eligible team left out of the playoffs had as many wins as the Cowboys. They plan to rectify that behind senior quarterback James Tabary, who's thrown 44 TDs over the last two seasons, and a deep running back unit. While the defense led the FCS against the run, it lost some key players. Safety BJ Blunt is the leader.

Wofford: AP; Sencry: Montana Athletics; Blackman: Central Arkansas Athletics

18. MONTANA

(7-4, 5-3 Big Sky)

Griz fans hope that the return of coach Bobby Hauck, who went 80-17 and led three FCS runner-up finishes from 2003-09, will return the longtime Big Sky power to national prominence. Quarterback Gresch Jensen, who threw for 20 touchdowns as a freshman, will look to keep connecting with wide receivers Keenan Curran and Jerry Louie-McGhee. Linebacker Josh Buss is primed for a banner senior season, and safety Josh Sandry returns after intercepting three passes.



JOSH SANDRY, MONTANA

19. NORTHERN IOWA

(8-5, 6-2 Missouri Valley)

On a playoff team that lost a lot of standouts, getting senior quarterback Eli Dunne (2,704 yards, 26 TDs) and running back Marcus Weymiller back is a good start to having another strong season. Senior linebacker Rickey Neal (9.5 sacks) is one of the fiercest pass rushers in the Missouri Valley.

20. NORTH CAROLINA A&T

(12-0, 8-0 MEAC)

First-time head coach Sam Washington, the Aggies' former defensive coordinator, has taken over last year's only unbeaten FCS team, which won MEAC and Celebration Bowl titles. No team in the conference can match the offensive firepower of MEAC Offensive Player of the Year Lamar Raynard (2,932 passing yards, 31 total TDs) and running back Marquell Cartwright (1,190 yards, 14 TDs).

21. YOUNGSTOWN STATE

(6-5, 4-4 Missouri Valley)

Coach Bo Pelini's 2016 national runners-up seek to get back on track. Senior running back Tevin McCaster (1,066 yards, 13 TDs) has a nose for the end zone, and quarterback Nathan Mays should be improved in his second season as the starter. The Penguins are always physical, and defensive end Justus Reed and linebacker Armand Dellovade set that tone on defense.

22. AUSTIN PEAY

(8-4, 7-1 Ohio Valley)

Last year's biggest surprise — the Governors overcame a 29-game losing streak and losses in 47 of 48 games — will threaten Jacksonville State's dominance in the OVC. Eddie Robinson Award-winning coach Will Healy has two quality quarterbacks (Jeremiah Oatsvall and JaVaughn Craig) and running backs (Kentel Williams and Ahmaad Tanner). Defensive end Jaison Williams is a premier pass rusher.

23. SACRAMENTO STATE

(7-4, 6-2 Big Sky)

Expectations are sky high after the Hornets improved by five wins under coach Jody Sears, who was rewarded with a contract extension. Dynamic quarterback Kevin Thomson, who accounted for 26 touchdowns in eight games, has to remain healthy for the full season. Defensive end George Obinna and safety Mister Harriel are difference makers on an experienced defense.



CARLOS BLACKMAN, CENTRAL ARKANSAS

24. CENTRAL ARKANSAS

(10-2, 9-0 Southland)

New coach Nathan Brown, a former Bears quarterback who's been elevated from offensive coordinator, knows to pound the rock with running backs Carlos Blackman and Kierre Crossley. Graduation has made the secondary vulnerable, but the pass rush of defensive tackle Chris Terrell (20 tackles for a loss, 11 sacks) will help temper the losses.

25. STONY BROOK

(10-3, 7-1 CAA)

While quarterback Joe Carbone was one of the more improved players in the FCS last season, the Seawolves will have to overcome key losses offensively. Senior Jordan Gowins will step into the role of featured running back. The Seawolves will be led by their defense, which this season features defensive end John Haggart and linebackers Shayne Lawless and Noah McGinty.

OTHERS TO WATCH:

Idaho (4-8 FBS)
Monmouth (9-3, 4-1 Big South)
Montana State (5-6, 5-3 Big Sky)
Northern Arizona (7-5, 6-2 Big Sky)
South Dakota (8-5, 4-4 MVC)
Western Illinois (8-4, 5-3 MVC)
Yale (9-1, 6-1 Ivy)

ACC PREVIEW

Predicted Order of Finish

Atlantic



1 CLEMSON **TIGERS** 12-1, 7-1 ACC



2 FLORIDA STATE **SEMINOLES** 9-3, 6-2 ACC



3 NC STATE **WOLFPACK** 8-4, 4-4 ACC



4 WAKE FOREST **DEMON DEACONS** 7-5, 4-4 ACC



5 BOSTON COLLEGE **EAGLES** 6-6, 3-5 ACC



6 LOUISVILLE **CARDINALS** 6-6, 3-5 ACC



7 SYRACUSE **ORANGE** 6-6, 3-5 ACC

Coastal



1 MIAMI **HURRICANES** 10-3, 6-2 ACC



2 VIRGINIA TECH **HOKIES** 9-3, 5-3 ACC



3 GEORGIA TECH **YELLOW JACKETS** 7-5, 4-4 ACC



4 PITTSBURGH **PANTHERS** 6-6, 4-4 ACC



5 DUKE **BLUE DEVILS** 6-6, 4-4 ACC



6 NORTH CAROLINA **TAR HEELS** 4-8, 2-6 ACC



7 VIRGINIA **CAVALIERS** 4-8, 1-7 ACC

ACC Championship: **Clemson over Miami**

Games to Watch

SEPT. 3
VIRGINIA TECH AT FLORIDA STATE
Willie Taggart won't have to wait long for his first test as Seminoles head coach. The winner will get a big head start before divisional play begins.

SEPT. 13
BOSTON COLL. AT WAKE FOREST
Both of these upstarts have hopes of crashing the party in the Atlantic, but only the winner of this matchup will have a realistic chance to do so.

SEPT. 29
SYRACUSE AT CLEMSON
The Orange pulled off a shocker last year against Clemson. A road contest in Death Valley makes for an increased degree of difficulty in the rematch.

SEPT. 29
FLORIDA STATE AT LOUISVILLE
The Cardinals have won the last two meetings, including a 63–20 thrashing in Florida State's last trip to Papa John's Cardinal Stadium in 2016.

OCT. 6
FLORIDA STATE AT MIAMI
The bitter in-state rivals still haven't met in an ACC title game, but Miami is back after snapping a seven-game losing streak in the series last year.

OCT. 20
NC STATE AT CLEMSON
The Tigers have won six games in a row in the series, but they escaped by the slimmest of margins in 2016 and '17. Can the Pack finally break through?

Bryant, Dillon, Jackson, Marshall, Ratliff-Williams, Allen: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Akers: FSU Athletics; Finley: NC State Athletics; Colburn: Tom Lynn; Smith, Dungey, Richards: Tom DiPace; Rickett: Fred Vuich/Pitt Athletics; Jones: Margaret Bowles; Ellis: John Sommers II

2018 Unit Rankings

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
BOSTON COLLEGE	13	2	12	1	5	6	5
CLEMSON	1	3	2	2	1	2	1
DUKE	7	10	9	14	10	3	11
FLORIDA STATE	4	1	5	4	4	7	2
GEORGIA TECH	8	5	14	10	13	8	13
LOUISVILLE	10	12	4	7	8	9	10
MIAMI	5	4	3	8	3	1	3
NORTH CAROLINA	12	6	7	12	9	12	12
NC STATE	2	8	1	3	7	11	9
PITTSBURGH	9	7	13	11	6	4	7
SYRACUSE	6	14	11	9	12	14	14
VIRGINIA	14	13	10	13	14	5	6
VIRGINIA TECH	3	11	8	6	2	10	4
WAKE FOREST	11	9	6	5	11	13	8

Recruiting by School

1. Clemson
2. Miami
3. Florida State
4. North Carolina
5. Virginia Tech
6. NC State
7. Louisville
8. Pittsburgh
9. Syracuse
10. Georgia Tech
11. Wake Forest
12. Duke
13. Virginia
14. Boston College


ZACH ALLEN, BOSTON COLLEGE


KELLY BRYANT, CLEMSON

2018 Bowl Projections

Orange Bowl (CFP): Clemson vs. Georgia

Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl: Miami vs. Penn State

Belk Bowl: Virginia Tech vs. Missouri

Camping World Bowl: Florida State vs. Texas

Pinstripe Bowl: NC State vs. Nebraska

Sun Bowl: Louisville vs. Arizona

Military Bowl: Boston College vs. Navy

Independence Bowl: Georgia Tech vs. Louisiana Tech

Quick Lane Bowl: Wake Forest vs. Indiana

ACC Coordinator Carousel

Duke: Defense
New: Ben Albert, Matt Guerrieri
Old: Ben Albert, Jim Knowles

Florida State: Offense
New: Walt Bell
Old: Lawrence Dawsey, Randy Sanders

Florida State: Defense
New: Harlon Barnett
Old: Charles Kelly

Georgia Tech: Defense
New: Nate Woody
Old: Ted Roof

Louisville: Defense
New: Brian VanGorder
Old: Peter Sirmon

North Carolina: Offense
New: Chris Kapilovic
Old: Gunter Brewer, Chris Kapilovic

NC State: Defense
New: Dave Huxtable, Ted Roof
Old: Dave Huxtable

Pittsburgh: Defense
New: Randy Bates
Old: Josh Conklin

Syracuse: Offense
New: Mike Lynch
Old: Sean Lewis, Mike Lynch

Virginia Tech: Defense
New: Bud Foster, Galen Scott
Old: Bud Foster

OCT. 27
CLEMSON AT FLORIDA STATE
It's the ACC's most anticipated game of the regular season for a reason: The teams have combined to win the last nine Atlantic Division titles.

NOV. 3
LOUISVILLE AT CLEMSON
Jawon Pass will try to do something Lamar Jackson couldn't: defeat the Tigers, which Louisville hasn't done since joining the ACC in 2014.

NOV. 3
FLORIDA STATE AT NC STATE
The Pack beat FSU last season for the first time since 2012 and are looking for back-to-back wins in the series for the first time since 2005-06.

NOV. 10
MIAMI AT GEORGIA TECH
Paul Johnson and Mark Richt will square off for the 11th consecutive year, dating to Richt's time as the boss at Georgia.

NOV. 10
VIRGINIA TECH AT PITTSBURGH
The Panthers have pulled off huge upsets in each of the past two Novembers. Tech will be ready for this trip to Heinz Field.

NOV. 17
MIAMI AT VIRGINIA TECH
This game could decide the winner of the Coastal Division. The teams have split their past 10 meetings and the past two division titles.


KIRVONTE BENSON, GEORGIA TECH

ACC Returning Leaders

Passing	ATT	COMP	PCT	YDS	TD	INT	AVG/G
Eric Dungey, Syracuse	377	225	59.7	2,495	14	9	277.2
Ryan Finley, NC State	479	312	65.1	3,518	17	6	270.6
Malik Rosier, Miami	415	224	54.0	3,120	26	14	240.0

Rushing	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
AJ Dillon, Boston College	300	1,589	5.3	14	75	122.2
TaQuon Marshall, Georgia Tech	247	1,146	4.6	17	78	104.2
KirVonte Benson, Georgia Tech	204	1,053	5.2	6	65	95.7

Receiving	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Jaylen Smith, Louisville	60	980	16.3	7	75	98.0
Kelvin Harmon, NC State	69	1,017	14.7	4	48	78.2
Olamide Zaccheaus, Virginia	85	895	10.5	5	81	68.8

Tackles: Joe Giles-Harris, Duke (125); Jordan Mack, Virginia (111)
Sacks: Clelin Ferrell, Clemson (9.5); Austin Bryant, Clemson (8.5)
Interceptions: Lukas Denis, Boston College (7); Mark Gilbert, Duke (6)

2017 ACC Standings

ATLANTIC	ACC	OVERALL	COASTAL	ACC	OVERALL
Clemson	7-1	12-2	Miami	7-1	10-3
NC State	6-2	9-4	Virginia Tech	5-3	9-4
Wake Forest	4-4	8-5	Georgia Tech	4-4	5-6
Boston College	4-4	7-6	Pittsburgh	3-5	5-7
Louisville	4-4	8-5	Virginia	3-5	6-7
Florida State	3-5	7-6	Duke	3-5	7-6
Syracuse	2-6	4-8	North Carolina	1-7	3-9

2017 Bowl Results

Quick Lane Bowl: Duke 36, Northern Illinois 14
Independence Bowl: Florida State 42, Southern Miss 13
Pinstripe Bowl: Iowa 27, Boston College 20
Military Bowl: Navy 49, Virginia 7
Camping World Bowl: Oklahoma State 30, Virginia Tech 21
Belk Bowl: Wake Forest 55, Texas A&M 52
Sun Bowl: NC State 52, Arizona State 31
TaxSlayer Bowl: Mississippi State 31, Louisville 27
Orange Bowl: Wisconsin 34, Miami 24
Sugar Bowl (CFP Semifinal): Alabama 24, Clemson 6

2017 ACC TEAM STATS & RANKINGS

OFFENSE

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
BOSTON COLLEGE	25.7 (12)	220.4 (3)	166.3 (13)	386.7 (9)
CLEMSON	33.3 (3)	194.1 (4)	235.5 (8)	429.6 (5)
DUKE	26.5 (10)	171.4 (8)	213.4 (11)	384.8 (10)
FLORIDA STATE	27.8 (8)	155.7 (11)	196.2 (12)	351.9 (13)
GEORGIA TECH	28.1 (7)	307.4 (1)	84.3 (14)	391.6 (8)
LOUISVILLE	38.1 (1)	245.1 (2)	299.8 (1)	544.9 (1)
MIAMI	29.1 (5)	160.8 (10)	242.5 (6)	403.3 (7)
NORTH CAROLINA	26.0 (11)	144.2 (13)	225.4 (9)	369.6 (11)
NC STATE	32.2 (4)	176.4 (6)	275.4 (4)	451.8 (4)
PITT	23.9 (13)	148.5 (12)	217.7 (10)	366.2 (12)
SYRACUSE	27.4 (9)	161.5 (9)	294.8 (2)	456.3 (3)
VIRGINIA	22.5 (14)	93.5 (14)	248.7 (5)	342.2 (14)
VIRGINIA TECH	28.2 (6)	173.4 (7)	239.5 (7)	412.8 (6)
WAKE FOREST	35.3 (2)	188.9 (5)	276.8 (3)	465.8 (2)

DEFENSE

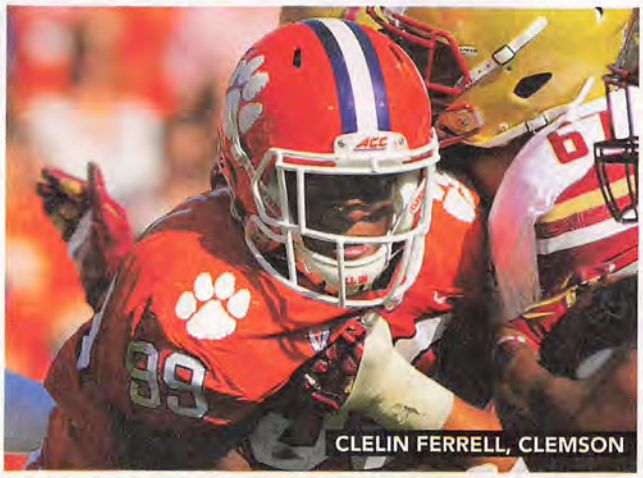
	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
BOSTON COLLEGE	22.8 (6)	190.9 (11)	191.9 (4)	382.8 (8)
CLEMSON	13.6 (1)	114.9 (1)	161.9 (1)	276.7 (1)
DUKE	20.2 (3)	153.2 (7)	179.4 (3)	332.6 (4)
FLORIDA STATE	21.2 (5)	135.6 (4)	195.5 (5)	331.1 (3)
GEORGIA TECH	26.5 (8)	153.6 (8)	200.6 (7)	354.3 (5)
LOUISVILLE	27.4 (10)	163.4 (9)	224.7 (10)	388.1 (10)
MIAMI	21.0 (4)	145.8 (6)	217.1 (8)	362.8 (6)
NORTH CAROLINA	31.3 (13)	213.0 (14)	223.1 (9)	436.1 (12)
NC STATE	25.2 (7)	131.0 (3)	253.2 (12)	384.2 (9)
PITT	26.6 (9)	142.4 (5)	254.2 (13)	396.6 (11)
SYRACUSE	32.2 (14)	196.7 (12)	247.3 (11)	444.0 (13)
VIRGINIA	28.4 (12)	199.3 (13)	165.8 (2)	365.1 (7)
VIRGINIA TECH	14.8 (2)	119.5 (2)	199.8 (6)	319.3 (2)
WAKE FOREST	28.3 (11)	185.8 (10)	271.5 (14)	457.3 (14)

ALL-ACC TEAM

First-Team Offense

QB	**Ryan Finley**	6-4	210	Sr.	NC State
RB	**Cam Akers**	5-11	213	So.	Florida State
RB	**AJ Dillon**	6-0	245	So.	Boston College
AP	**Greg Dortch**	5-9	165	So.	Wake Forest
WR	**Kelvin Harmon**	6-3	213	Jr.	NC State
WR	**Ahmmon Richards**	6-1	190	Jr.	Miami
TE	**Tommy Sweeney**	6-5	255	Sr.	Boston College
C	**Ryan Anderson**	6-6	305	Sr.	Wake Forest
OL	**Parker Braun**	6-3	280	Jr.	Georgia Tech
OL	**Mitch Hyatt**	6-5	305	Sr.	Clemson
OL	**Tyler Jones**	6-3	300	Sr.	NC State
OL	**Chris Lindstrom**	6-4	305	Sr.	Boston College


RYAN FINLEY, NC STATE


CLELIN FERRELL, CLEMSON

First-Team Defense

DL	**Clelin Ferrell**	6-5	260	Jr.	Clemson
DL	**Dexter Lawrence**	6-4	340	Jr.	Clemson
DL	**Ricky Walker**	6-2	304	Sr.	Virginia Tech
DL	**Christian Wilkins**	6-4	300	Sr.	Clemson
LB	**Joe Giles-Harris**	6-2	240	Jr.	Duke
LB	**Kendall Joseph**	6-0	225	Sr.	Clemson
LB	**Shaq Quarterman**	6-1	240	Jr.	Miami
CB	**Mark Gilbert**	6-1	175	Jr.	Duke
CB	**Levonta Taylor**	5-10	181	Jr.	Florida State
S	**Lukas Denis**	5-11	185	Sr.	Boston College
S	**Jaquan Johnson**	5-11	190	Sr.	Miami

First-Team Specialists

K	**Ricky Aguayo**	6-2	216	Jr.	Florida State
P	**Sterling Hofrichter**	5-9	197	Jr.	Syracuse
KR	**Anthony Ratliff-Williams**	6-1	205	Jr.	North Carolina
PR	**Michael Walker**	6-0	200	Sr.	Boston College

SECOND-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Josh Jackson**	6-1	216	So.	Virginia Tech
RB	**KirVonte Benson**	5-9	211	Jr.	Georgia Tech
RB	**Travis Etienne**	5-10	200	So.	Clemson
AP	**Olamide Zaccheaus**	5-8	190	Sr.	Virginia
WR	**Nyqwan Murray**	5-11	185	Sr.	Florida State
WR	**Jaylen Smith**	6-4	223	Sr.	Louisville
TE	**Ravian Pierce**	6-3	244	Sr.	Syracuse
C	**Justin Falcinelli**	6-4	305	Sr.	Clemson
OL	**Alex Bookser**	6-6	320	Sr.	Pittsburgh
OL	**Mekhi Becton**	6-7	359	So.	Louisville
OL	**Garrett Bradbury**	6-3	300	Sr.	NC State
OL	**Navaughn Donaldson**	6-6	350	So.	Miami

SECOND-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Zach Allen**	6-5	285	Sr.	Boston College
DL	**Austin Bryant**	6-5	265	Sr.	Clemson
DL	**Demarcus Christmas**	6-4	308	Sr.	Florida State
DL	**Joe Jackson**	6-5	258	Jr.	Miami
LB	**Oluwaseun Idowu**	6-0	230	Sr.	Pittsburgh
LB	**Michael Pinckney**	6-1	228	Jr.	Miami
LB	**Mook Reynolds**	6-0	185	Sr.	Virginia Tech
CB	**Michael Jackson**	6-1	200	Sr.	Miami
CB	**Trayvon Mullen**	6-2	190	Jr.	Clemson
S	**Brenton Nelson**	5-11	180	So.	Virginia
S	**Juan Thornhill**	6-0	200	Sr.	Virginia

SECOND-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Blanton Creque**	5-11	190	Jr.	Louisville
P	**Oscar Bradburn**	6-1	202	So.	Virginia Tech
KR	**Joe Reed**	6-1	215	Jr.	Virginia
PR	**D.J. Matthews**	5-10	154	So.	Florida State


Mekhi Becton
Louisville


Brittain Brown
Duke


Zach Allen
Boston College


Joe Reed
Virginia

THIRD-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Eric Dungey**	6-4	228	Sr.	Syracuse
RB	**Brittain Brown**	6-1	200	So.	Duke
RB	**Travis Homer**	5-11	195	Jr.	Miami
AP	**Anthony Ratliff-Williams**	6-1	205	Jr.	North Carolina
WR	**Tee Higgins**	6-4	200	So.	Clemson
WR	**Hunter Renfrow**	5-10	180	Sr.	Clemson
TE	**Daniel Helm**	6-4	255	Sr.	Duke
C	**Alec Eberle**	6-4	295	Sr.	Florida State
OL	**Cody Conway**	6-6	300	Sr.	Syracuse
OL	**Justin Herron**	6-5	290	Sr.	Wake Forest
OL	**Yosuah Nijman**	6-7	322	Sr.	Virginia Tech
OL	**Terronne Prescod**	6-5	331	Sr.	NC State

THIRD-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Brian Burns**	6-5	231	Jr.	Florida State
DL	**Malik Carney**	6-3	235	Sr.	North Carolina
DL	**Darian Roseboro**	6-4	287	Sr.	NC State
DL	**Chris Slayton**	6-4	320	Sr.	Syracuse
LB	**Cole Holcomb**	6-1	225	Sr.	North Carolina
LB	**Dorian Etheridge**	6-3	233	So.	Louisville
LB	**Jordan Mack**	6-2	225	Jr.	Virginia
CB	**Adonis Alexander**	6-3	207	Sr.	Virginia Tech
CB	**Essang Bassey**	5-10	185	Jr.	Wake Forest
S	**Reggie Floyd**	6-0	221	Jr.	Virginia Tech
S	**A.J. Gray**	6-1	218	Sr.	Georgia Tech

THIRD-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Greg Huegel**	5-11	195	Sr.	Clemson
P	**Dom Maggio**	6-3	185	Jr.	Wake Forest
KR	**Sean Riley**	5-8	151	Jr.	Syracuse
PR	**Greg Dortch**	5-9	165	So.	Wake Forest

Benson, Ferrell, Allen: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Finley: Chris Keane; Becton: Tom DiPace; Brown: Margaret Bowles; Reed: John Sommers II

Boston College **Eagles**

National Forecast: **39** • ACC Atlantic Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **6-6, 3-5 ACC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Massachusetts
Sept.	8	Holy Cross
Sept.	13	at Wake Forest
Sept.	22	at Purdue
Sept.	29	Temple
Oct.	6	at NC State
Oct.	13	Louisville
Oct.	26	Miami
Nov.	3	at Virginia Tech
Nov.	10	Clemson
Nov.	17	at Florida State
Nov.	24	Syracuse

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 4-4 ACC

Sept.	1	at Northern Illinois	W	23-20
Sept.	9	Wake Forest	L	10-34
Sept.	16	Notre Dame	L	20-49
Sept.	23	at Clemson	L	7-34
Sept.	30	Central Michigan	W	28-8
Oct.	7	Virginia Tech	L	10-23
Oct.	14	at Louisville	W	45-42
Oct.	21	at Virginia	W	41-10
Oct.	27	Florida State	W	35-3
Nov.	11	NC State	L	14-17
Nov.	18	vs. Connecticut #	W	39-16
Nov.	25	at Syracuse	W	42-14
Dec.	27	vs. Iowa %	L	20-27

#Boston %Pinstripe Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Finn Dirstine, OG, Acton, MA
2. Elijah Jones, ATH, Bronx, NY
3. Thomas Shelmire, OG, Dallas, TX
4. Hugh Davis, OLB, Indianapolis, IN
5. Evan Stewart, S, Sparta, NJ
6. Joey Luchetti, TE, Wayland, MA
7. Nick DeNucci, ILB, Denville, NJ
8. Ryan Betro, DT, Walpole, MA
9. Vinny DePalma, ILB, Wayne, NJ
10. Johnny Langan, QB, Wayne, NJ

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	25.7 ppg	12	85
Rushing	220.4 ypg	3	25
Passing	166.3 ypg	13	114
Total	386.7 ypg	9	84
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	22.8 ppg	6	36
Rushing	190.9 ypg	11	94
Passing	191.9 ypg	4	24
Total	382.8 ypg	8	57
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
+5	+0.38	4	30

STAT CORNER

8-1-1

BC's sustained in-season turnaround surprised Vegas. After starting the year 1-2 against the spread, the Eagles finished 8-1-1.

OFFENSE The Eagles aren't going to mess around with anything too fancy this season, nor should they. They have a true feature back in sophomore AJ Dillon with a huge, experienced line and will butter their bread by handing the ball off and running play action.

Dillon came on toward the second half of last season and rushed for 1,589 yards and 14 touchdowns on 5.3 yards per carry. Coach Steve Addazio has always built his offenses behind a strong running game, and this one might be his best yet.

It's the quarterback position that still has a few question marks around it. Even though Anthony Brown had a solid freshman campaign, his knee injury in the loss to NC State makes for some unanswered questions going into the fall. His backup, fellow sophomore EJ Perry, could hold down the starting job if Brown's recovery slows. If Perry performs well enough in that spot, perhaps a quarterback controversy brews. Stay tuned.

The receivers are as good as Addazio has had since he came to the Heights. Sophomore Kobay White and senior Jeff Smith complement tight end Tommy Sweeney, who led the team with 36 receptions for 512 yards and four touchdowns last season.

DEFENSE The strength of this side of the ball again will rest in the front seven. After the Eagles lost defensive end Harold Landry to injury late last season, the line still did not have a significant drop-off despite missing a first-round-caliber talent. Much of that had to do with the play of fellow end Zach Allen, who enters his senior year as a player who will also be on the radar of NFL scouts. Last year, Allen recorded 100 tackles (15.5 for a loss) and 6.0 sacks. He will command extra attention from blockers and free up fellow defenders.

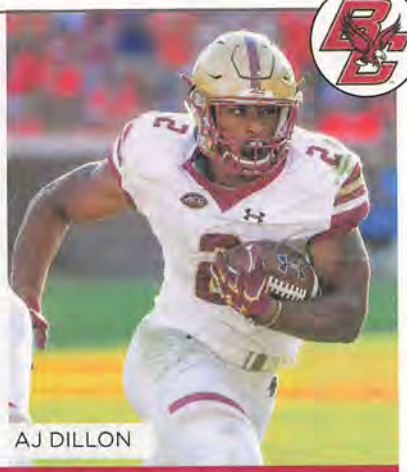
The drawback is that there isn't a ton of depth at defensive tackle, although Ray Smith and Tanner Karafa make a good starting pair.

The linebackers are in good shape despite getting decimated by injuries for most of last season. Connor Strachan, the team's leading tackler in 2016, returns after a knee injury wiped out his 2017 campaign. He returns on the strong side, while the middle should again be in the hands of sophomore John Lamot, who could have a breakout year.

The secondary lost cornerback Isaac Yiadom, but the safeties might be good enough to mask some deficiencies at the corner position early on. Senior Lukas Denis has blossomed into one of the ACC's top playmakers. He intercepted seven passes and played his best against top competition. He had 13 tackles, a forced fumble and an interception in the loss to Clemson.

SPECIALISTS The kicking game has been inconsistent over the past few years, as kicker Colton Lichtenberg made just 12-of-20 field goals last season. Michael Walker provides a capable option in the return game.

FINAL ANALYSIS This should be one of Addazio's best teams, even though it may not show up in the record, as the Eagles draw both Miami and Virginia Tech out of the ACC Coastal Division and travel to an improved Purdue in the non-conference slate. Still, Dillon should have a big year, and the defense has enough returning firepower to keep games close. If either Brown or Perry provides a real threat in the passing game, the Eagles can win more than seven games under Addazio for the first time in his six years at the Heights.



AJ DILLON

"Our coaches were laughing when watching game tape of (AJ) Dillon. Not laughing at him, laughing at how ridiculously good he is."

— An opposing ACC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (9)

WR	9	Kobay White (So.)	1	Elijah Robinson (Sr.)
WR	6	Jeff Smith (Sr.)	82	Nolan Borgersen (Jr.)
LT	67	**Aaron Monteiro (Sr.)**	66	Anthony Palazzolo (Jr.)
LG	73	**Sam Schmal (Sr.)**	76	Elijah Johnson (So.)
C	64	**Ben Petrula (So.)**	77	Jon Baker (Sr.)
RG	70	**John Phillips (Jr.)**	75	Chris Lindstrom (Sr.)
RT	75	**Chris Lindstrom (Sr.)**	67	Aaron Monteiro (Sr.)
TE	89	**Tommy Sweeney (Sr.)**	86	Ray Marten (Jr.)
TE	81	**Chris Garrison (Jr.)**	85	Korab Idrizi (Jr.)
QB	13	**Anthony Brown (So.)**	8	EJ Perry (So.)
RB	2	**AJ Dillon (So.)**	35	Travis Levy (So.)

DEFENSE (6)

DE	2	**Zach Allen (Sr.)**	44	Brandon Barlow (So.)
DT	48	Tanner Karafa (Jr.)	99	TJ Rayam (So.)
DT	96	**Ray Smith (Sr.)**	91	Jaleel Berry (Fr.)
DE	11	Wyatt Ray (Sr.)	90	Bryce Morais (So.)
SLB	13	Connor Strachan (Sr.)	49	**Kevin Bletzer (Sr.)**
MLB	28	**John Lamot (So.)**	51	Isaiah Miranda (So.)
WLB	55	Isaiah McDuffie (So.)	16	Davon Jones (Jr.)
CB	24	Taj-Amir Torres (Sr.)	7	Tate Haynes (Fr.)
CB	4	Hamp Cheevers (Jr.)	29	Brandon Sebastian (Fr.)
SS	8	**Will Harris (Sr.)**	25	Mehdi El Attrach (Jr.)
FS	21	**Lukas Denis (Sr.)**	17	Mike Palmer (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	99	Colton Lichtenberg (Sr.)	KR	3	Michael Walker (Sr.)
P	95	Grant Carlson (So.)	PR	3	Michael Walker (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Anthony Brown, 258-134-1,367-9, 11 TDs
Rushing: AJ Dillon, 300 att., 1,589 yds., 14 TDs
Receiving: Tommy Sweeney, 36 rec., 512 yds., 4 TDs
Tackles: Zach Allen, 100
Sacks: Zach Allen, 6.0
Interceptions: Lukas Denis, 7

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Steve Addazio
Record at School: 31-33 (5 years)
Career Record: 44-44 (7 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Scot Loeffler
Defensive Coordinators: Anthony Campanile, Jim Reid
Chestnut Hill, MA • Alumni Stadium (44,500)

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

Clemson Tigers

National Forecast: **2** • ACC Atlantic Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **12-1, 7-1 ACC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Furman
Sept.	8	at Texas A&M
Sept.	15	Georgia Southern
Sept.	22	at Georgia Tech
Sept.	29	Syracuse
Oct.	6	at Wake Forest
Oct.	20	NC State
Oct.	27	at Florida State
Nov.	3	Louisville
Nov.	10	at Boston College
Nov.	17	Duke
Nov.	24	South Carolina

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 12-2, 8-1 ACC

Sept.	2	Kent State	W	56-3
Sept.	9	Auburn	W	14-6
Sept.	16	at Louisville	W	47-21
Sept.	23	Boston College	W	34-7
Sept.	30	at Virginia Tech	W	31-17
Oct.	7	Wake Forest	W	28-14
Oct.	13	at Syracuse	L	24-27
Oct.	28	Georgia Tech	W	24-10
Nov.	4	at NC State	W	38-31
Nov.	11	Florida State	W	31-14
Nov.	18	The Citadel	W	61-3
Nov.	25	at South Carolina	W	34-10
Dec.	2	vs. Miami #	W	38-3
Jan.	1	vs. Alabama %	L	6-24

#Charlotte %Sugar Bowl: CFB Playoff Semifinal

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Trevor Lawrence, QB, Cartersville, GA
2. Xavier Thomas, DE, Florence, SC
3. KJ Henry, DE, Winston-Salem, NC
4. Jackson Carman, OT, Fairfield, OH
5. Derion Kendrick, WR, Rock Hill, SC
6. Justyn Ross, WR, Phenix City, AL
7. Kyler McMichael, CB, Atlanta, GA
8. Josh Belk, DT, Fort Lawn, SC
9. Mario Goodrich, DB, Kansas City, MO
10. Justin Mascoll, DE, Snellville, GA

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	33.3 ppg	3	32
Rushing	194.1 ypg	4	35
Passing	235.5 ypg	8	61
Total	429.6 ypg	5	38
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	13.6 ppg	1	2
Rushing	114.9 ypg	1	12
Passing	161.9 ypg	1	4
Total	276.7 ypg	1	4
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
+4	+0.29	6	43

STAT CORNER

21.1

Clemson's havoc rate (combined tackles for a loss, forced fumbles and passes defensed per play) was 21.1 percent, fifth in FBS.

OFFENSE Dealing with an offseason of disappointment following a 12–2 record qualifies as a first-world problem, but a 24–6 dismantling at the hands of Alabama in the Sugar Bowl sent a painful jolt through a program that is not accustomed to such misery. Where Deshaun Watson's wizardry delivered a national title in 2016 and darned near another in 2015, last season presented a lesson: Watson, Mike Williams, Jordan Leggett and others were really freaking good.

The arrival of stud quarterback Trevor Lawrence introduced a fascinating subplot that lasted the entire offseason and will probably stretch into the season. Incumbent Kelly Bryant performed far better than anyone anticipated as a first-year starter, and his running ability is hard for most defenses to contain. But the Tigers are probably going to have to be more explosive in the downfield passing game to close the deal and knock off elite postseason competition. And the lavishly talented Lawrence brings precisely that quality.

The receiving corps has lost a load of talent the last two years, but they don't call Clemson "Wide Receiver U." for nothing. Junior Diondre Overton and sophomore Tee Higgins are poised for breakout seasons. Amari Rodgers and Derion Kendrick are more than capable. And don't forget about little Hunter Renfrow.

The offensive line lost guards Tyrone Crowder and Taylor Hearn, but there's enough talent up front to open holes for dynamic backs Tavien Feaster and Travis Etienne.

DEFENSE This is just unfair. The Tigers would've been hard to block even if Christian Wilkins, Clelin Ferrell and Austin Bryant had gone pro. None of them did, meaning this is basically an NFL starting line when you add junior Dexter Lawrence to the equation. This defensive line just comes at you in waves, and Brent Venables should be able to rotate frequently this season with an assortment of backups who would be starters at most other places. Freshmen K.J. Henry and Xavier Thomas bring even more elite talent at end.

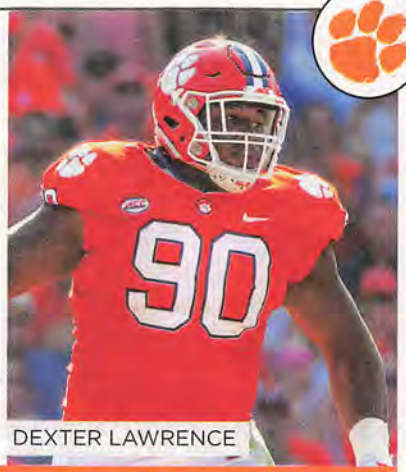
Outside linebacker Dorian O'Daniel is gone after a monster senior season, and he was extraordinarily versatile. But coaches are intrigued about the idea of rangy, fast Isaiah Simmons holding up against the run while also performing well covering slot receivers.

The linebacker corps is anchored by senior Kendall Joseph and junior Tre Lamar, who bring a nasty, physical edge. There's plenty of depth behind them, too.

The secondary endured a wave of injuries last year, and it needs to stay healthy in 2018 after losing Ryan Carter, Van Smith and Marcus Edmond. At corner there's no experience behind Trayvon Mullen, A.J. Terrell and Mark Fields, but freshmen Kyler McMichael and Mario Goodrich are deemed capable of providing immediate backup help. K'Von Wallace and Tanner Muse are solid starters at safety, but depth is an issue there too.

SPECIALISTS Kicker Greg Huegel is back after missing most of last season with a torn ACL. Punter Will Spiers was a valuable weapon as a freshman. The Tigers need to replace Ray-Ray McCloud's explosiveness on punt returns.

FINAL ANALYSIS Upsets happen, as Clemson knows after losing to Syracuse last year and Pitt in 2016. But this team is just so much more talented than almost everyone it will play. A fourth consecutive playoff appearance seems like the baseline for this team. Clemson-Bama Part 4 sounds fun.



DEXTER LAWRENCE

"Trust me when I say this: (Trevor Lawrence) is the real deal. He may not be the starter in the first week of the season, but I'd be shocked if he's not by the last."

— An opposing ACC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	5	Tee Higgins (So.)	14	Diondre Overton (Jr.)	
WR	3	Amari Rodgers (So.)	10	Derion Kendrick (Fr.)	
WR	13	**Hunter Renfrow (Sr.)**	1	Trevion Thompson (Sr.)	
LT	75	**Mitch Hyatt (Sr.)**	72	Blake Vinson (Fr.)	
LG	74	John Simpson (Jr.)	65	Matt Bockhorst (Fr.)	
C	50	Justin Falcinelli (Sr.)	59	Gage Cervenka (Jr.)	
RG	76	**Sean Pollard (Jr.)**	62	Cade Stewart (So.)	
RT	73	Tremayne Anchrum (Jr.)	78	Chandler Reeves (So.)	
TE	80	**Milan Richard (Sr.)**	44	Garrett Williams (Jr.)	
QB	2	**Kelly Bryant (Sr.)**	16	Trevor Lawrence (Fr.)	
RB	9	Travis Etienne (So.)	28	**Tavien Feaster (Jr.)**	

DEFENSE (8)

DE	99	**Clelin Ferrell (Jr.)**	3	Xavier Thomas (Fr.)
DT	90	**Dexter Lawrence (Jr.)**	67	Albert Huggins (Sr.)
DT	42	**Christian Wilkins (Sr.)**	44	Nyles Pinckney (So.)
DE	7	**Austin Bryant (Sr.)**	45	Chris Register (Sr.)
OLB	34	**Kendall Joseph (Sr.)**	5	Shaq Smith (So.)
MLB	57	**Tre Lamar (Jr.)**	47	James Skalski (Jr.)
OLB	11	Isaiah Simmons (So.)	30	Jalen Williams (Sr.)
CB	1	**Trayvon Mullen (Jr.)**	2	Mark Fields (Sr.)
CB	8	A.J. Terrell (So.)		Kyler McMichael (Fr.)
SS	19	**Tanner Muse (Jr.)**	11	Isaiah Simmons (So.)
FS	12	K'Von Wallace (Jr.)	14	Denzel Johnson (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	92	Greg Huegel (Sr.)	KR	9	Travis Etienne (So.)
P	48	Will Spiers (So.)	PR	3	Amari Rodgers (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Kelly Bryant, 398-262-2,802-8, 13 TDs
Rushing: Travis Etienne, 107 att., 766 yds., 13 TDs
Receiving: Hunter Renfrow, 60 rec., 602 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: Kendall Joseph, 96
Sacks: Clelin Ferrell, 9.5
Interceptions: Trayvon Mullen, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Dabo Swinney
Record at School: 101-30 (9+ years)
Career Record: 101-30 (9+ years)
Offensive Coordinators: Tony Elliott, Jeff Scott
Defensive Coordinator: Brent Venables
Clemson, SC • Clemson Memorial Stadium (81,500)

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

Florida State **Seminoles**

National Forecast: **13** • ACC Atlantic Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **9-3, 6-2 ACC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	3	Virginia Tech
Sept.	8	Samford
Sept.	15	at Syracuse
Sept.	22	Northern Illinois
Sept.	29	at Louisville
Oct.	6	at Miami
Oct.	20	Wake Forest
Oct.	27	Clemson
Nov.	3	at NC State
Nov.	10	at Notre Dame
Nov.	17	Boston College
Nov.	24	Florida

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 3-5 ACC

Sept.	2	vs. Alabama #	L	7-24
Sept.	23	NC State	L	21-27
Sept.	30	at Wake Forest	W	26-19
Oct.	7	Miami	L	20-24
Oct.	14	at Duke	W	17-10
Oct.	21	Louisville	L	28-31
Oct.	27	at Boston College	L	3-35
Nov.	4	Syracuse	W	27-24
Nov.	11	at Clemson	L	14-31
Nov.	18	Delaware State	W	77-6
Nov.	25	at Florida	W	38-22
Dec.	2	UL Monroe	W	42-10
Dec.	27	vs. Southern Miss %	W	42-13

#Atlanta %Independence Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Jaiden Woodbey, S, Fontana, CA
2. A.J. Lytton, CB, Upper Marlboro, MD
3. Asante Samuel, CB, Sunrise, FL
4. Robert Cooper, DT, Lilburn, GA
5. Warren Thompson, WR, Seffner, FL
6. Tre'Shaun Harrison, WR, Seattle, WA
7. Xavier Peters, OLB, West Chester, OH
8. Malcolm Lamar, DE, Seffner, FL
9. Isaiah Bolden, CB, Wesley Chapel, FL
10. Amari Gainer, OLB, Tallahassee, FL

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	27.8 ppg	8	71
Rushing	155.7 ypg	11	77
Passing	196.2 ypg	12	89
Total	351.9 ypg	13	100
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	21.2 ppg	5	29
Rushing	135.6 ypg	4	31
Passing	195.5 ypg	5	29
Total	331.1 ypg	3	18
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
-6	-0.46	12	102

STAT CORNER

23.5

FSU got stuffed at or behind the line on 23.5% of its non-sack carries in 2017, 10th worst in FBS and by far the worst in the ACC.

OFFENSE Given Willie Taggart's track record and Florida State's abundance of talent at running back, it's a safe bet the Seminoles will run early and often this fall. At Oregon in 2017, Taggart's offense ranked 12th nationally in rushing yardage, and his USF squads ranked in the top 10 in 2015 and 2016.

Cam Akers, who broke FSU's freshman rushing record with 1,024 yards in 2017, is back to lead the ground game. He will be joined by senior Jacques Patrick, who has rushed for more than 1,400 yards in his career.

If Taggart has a strong sense of who his quarterback is going to be this fall, though, he isn't letting on. Junior Deondre Francois, who started 13 games in 2016 before missing most of last season with a knee injury, likely would be the top choice if the decision were based solely on athletic ability. The problem is that it's still unclear when he will return to full speed, and he also has to rebuild his reputation in the locker room after several off-field missteps. Sophomore James Blackman, who started the final 12 games of 2017, merits an A-plus in the intangible categories but is not quite as accurate or athletic.

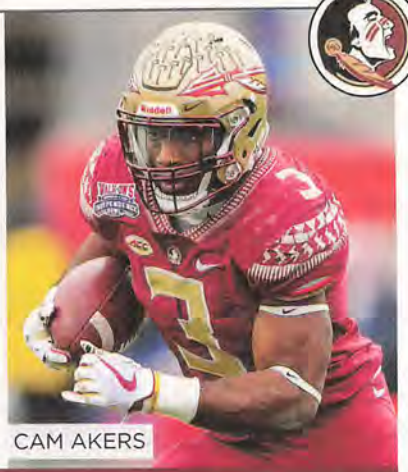
At receiver, senior Nyqwan Murray will be back despite missing spring drills with a minor knee injury, and junior Keith Gavin returns as well. Other than that, there isn't another returning wide receiver who had more than six catches in 2017. The Seminoles also will need to make strides on the offensive line, where they return six players with starting experience. They surrendered 32 sacks last season and 36 the year before.

DEFENSE The lone holdover from Jimbo Fisher's staff is defensive tackles coach Odell Haggins, and his group could be the strength of the defense. Senior Demarcus Christmas returns for his third season as a starter, and he likely will be joined up front by former five-star recruit Marvin Wilson. Depth could be an issue at end, but starters Brian Burns and Joshua Kaindoh are exceptional talents.

FSU will be tasked with replacing all three starting linebackers, but the Seminoles return plenty of talent and experience in the secondary — even after losing talented underclassmen Derwin James and Tarvarus McFadden to the NFL. Cornerback Levonta Taylor was very sound in his first season as a starter, and Stanford Samuels III showed star potential in the spring.

SPECIALISTS There's nothing but familiar faces at placekicker and punter, as Ricky Aguayo and Logan Tyler return for their third seasons as starters. Aguayo has been solid but not spectacular during his career; he converted on 18-of-21 field goals in 2017. Tyler has an exceptionally strong leg, but issues with consistency have hurt the Seminoles' coverage units.

FINAL ANALYSIS After Jimbo Fisher bolted for Texas A&M, FSU's administration wanted a head coach who could take the football program in a completely new direction. Taggart checked every box. The biggest change, of course, is the swapping of Fisher's plodding pro-style offense for the up-tempo, spread attack Taggart employed at Oregon and USF. FSU's defense also will take a more aggressive stance under former Michigan State co-coordinator Harlon Barnett. Judging by the excitement during spring drills and offseason workouts, FSU's players are fully on board. That alone should help the Seminoles improve upon their dismal 7–6 campaign from a year ago. How much they improve will depend largely on how quickly they can execute their new schemes at a high level.



CAM AKERS

"They used to man cover as good or better than anyone in college football. The last couple of years, guys in our league have been running wide open on them."

— An opposing ACC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)

WR	29	D.J. Matthews (So.)	14	Deonte Sheffield (Fr.)
WR	8	**Nyqwan Murray (Sr.)**	27	Ontaria Wilson (Fr.)
WR	89	**Keith Gavin (Jr.)**	15	Tamorrion Terry (Fr.)
LT	73	Jauan Williams (So.)	72	Mike Arnold (So.)
LG	69	Landon Dickerson (So.)	51	Baveon Johnson (So.)
C	54	**Alec Eberle (Sr.)**	57	Corey Martinez (Sr.)
RG	74	**Derrick Kelly (Sr.)**	70	**Cole Minshew (Jr.)**
RT	79	**Josh Ball (So.)**	75	Abdul Bello (Jr.)
TE	16	Tre' McKitty (So.)	82	Naseir Upshur (Jr.)
QB	1	**James Blackman (So.)**	12	Deondre Francois (Jr.)
RB	3	Cam Akers (So.)	9	**Jacques Patrick (Sr.)**

DEFENSE (3)

DE	99	**Brian Burns (Jr.)**	11	Janarius Robinson (So.)
DT	90	**Demarcus Christmas (Sr.)**	55	Fredrick Jones (Sr.)
DT	21	Marvin Wilson (So.)	12	Arthur Williams (Sr.)
DE	13	Joshua Kaindoh (So.)	94	Walvenski Aime (Sr.)
STAR	26	DeCalon Brooks (Fr.)	56	Emmett Rice (Jr.)
LB	5	Dontavious Jackson (Jr.)	51	Josh Brown (Jr.)
LB	22	Adonis Thomas (Jr.)	35	Leonard Warner (So.)
CB	1	**Levonta Taylor (Jr.)**	14	Kyle Meyers (Jr.)
CB	8	Stanford Samuels III (So.)	15	Carlos Becker III (Jr.)
S	23	Hamsah Nasirildeen (So.)	19	A.J. Westbrook (Sr.)
S	24	Cyrus Fagan (So.)	20	Jaiden Woodbey (Fr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	23	Ricky Aguayo (Jr.)	KR	89 Keith Gavin (Jr.)
P	21	Logan Tyler (Jr.)	PR	29 D.J. Matthews (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: James Blackman, 297-173-2,230-11, 19 TDs
Rushing: Cam Akers, 194 att., 1,024 yds., 7 TDs
Receiving: Nyqwan Murray, 40 rec., 604 yds., 4 TDs
Tackles: Brian Burns, 48
Sacks: Brian Burns, 4.5
Interceptions: Stanford Samuels III, 2; Levonta Taylor, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Willie Taggart
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: 47-50 (8 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Walt Bell
Defensive Coordinator: Harlon Barnett
Tallahassee, FL • Doak Campbell Stadium (79,560)

AP

Louisville Cardinals

National Forecast: **40** • ACC Atlantic Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **6-6, 3-5 ACC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	vs. Alabama #
Sept.	8	Indiana State
Sept.	15	Western Kentucky
Sept.	22	at Virginia
Sept.	29	Florida State
Oct.	5	Georgia Tech
Oct.	13	at Boston College
Oct.	27	Wake Forest
Nov.	3	at Clemson
Nov.	9	at Syracuse
Nov.	17	NC State
Nov.	24	Kentucky

#Orlando

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 4-4 ACC

Sept.	2	vs. Purdue #	W	35-28
Sept.	9	at North Carolina	W	47-35
Sept.	16	Clemson	L	21-47
Sept.	23	Kent State	W	42-3
Sept.	30	Murray State	W	55-10
Oct.	5	at NC State	L	25-39
Oct.	14	Boston College	L	42-45
Oct.	21	at Florida State	W	31-28
Oct.	28	at Wake Forest	L	32-42
Nov.	11	Virginia	W	38-21
Nov.	18	Syracuse	W	56-10
Nov.	25	at Kentucky	W	44-17
Dec.	30	vs. Miss. State %	L	27-31

#Indianapolis %TaxSlayer Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Jairus Brents, CB, Louisville, KY
2. Robert Hicks, ILB, Miami, FL
3. Trenell Troutman, S, Miami, FL
4. Marlon Character, S, Atlanta, GA*
5. Marcus Riley, WR, Tallahassee, FL
6. Chandler Jones, CB, Miami, FL
7. Mike Boykin, DE, Carrollton, GA*
8. Jatavious Harris, WR, Milledgeville, GA
9. Jared Goldwire, DT, Tacoma, WA*
10. Nigel Kilby, TE, Fort Wayne, IN*

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	38.1 ppg	1	11
Rushing	245.1 ypg	2	15
Passing	299.8 ypg	1	15
Total	544.9 ypg	1	3
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	27.4 ppg	10	70
Rushing	163.4 ypg	9	63
Passing	224.7 ypg	10	66
Total	388.1 ypg	10	62
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
+2	+0.15	7	56

STAT CORNER

49.5

Louisville gained 5.0 or more yards on 49.5% of its non-sack carries, tops in FBS. Lamar Jackson's impact was nearly immeasurable.

Tom DiPace

OFFENSE NFL teams aren't certain Lamar Jackson's best position is quarterback, but don't tell that to Bobby Petrino. He must replace his team's best runner and passer from the last two seasons, a guy the Cardinals could count on for more than 400 yards and three touchdowns per game.

Petrino will do that by returning to his pass-first roots with a quarterback who is more thrower than runner — Jawon Pass, who completed nearly 70 percent of his throws in a small sample size (33 attempts) last season. At 6'4" and 231 pounds with a powerful arm, Pass is more Brian Brohm than Jackson.

He'll benefit from a terrific collection of receivers. Jaylen Smith, Dez Fitzpatrick and Seth Dawkins combined for more than 2,300 yards and scored 20 TDs last season working with a quarterback eager to tuck and run. Tight end Micky Crum does his best work as a blocker.

Without Jackson, the tailbacks can expect more opportunities. Dae Williams did not play the first seven games but averaged more than 6.0 yards per carry and had 88 yards against Virginia.

The offensive line improved under coach Mike Summers, and mammoth sophomore tackle Mekhi Becton, who is 6'7", 359, is considered an emerging star.

DEFENSE Louisville's defense wobbled as the program transitioned from Todd Grantham to Peter Sirmon as the coordinator — and Sirmon heard the grumbling. He left to coach linebackers at California. Enter Brian VanGorder, a debatable choice considering he was fired four games into the 2016 season at Notre Dame. While you can debate Louisville's issues at coordinator, you can't dispute that the program lacks the elite defensive talent Charlie Strong collected during his four-season run. The talent drain has been so persistent that Louisville could start a defensive unit that does not feature a senior.

Dorian Etheridge was a revelation at linebacker, leading the team with 83 tackles as a true freshman. Etheridge is the only returnee who started all 13 games.

During the spring, the hunt for players who can run and tackle turned to another freshman — Robert Hicks, a four-star prospect from Miami. After enrolling for the spring semester, Hicks established himself as a playmaker in April. C.J. Avery and P.J. Blue also impressed at linebacker during the spring.

Louisville needs run stoppers as well as playmakers in the secondary. G.G. Robinson has the most experience at tackle, while Jon Greenard contributed 15.5 tackles for a loss at defensive end/outside linebacker. The Cards lost three starters in the secondary, but sophomore Russ Yeast has the ability to make a major jump.

SPECIALISTS The kicking game should be one of the strongest areas on the team. Blanton Creque drilled 17-of-20 field goal attempts, including 14 in a row. His career success percentage of .846 is the best in program history. Punter Mason King averaged 43.9 yards per kick. Yeast averaged 3.3 yards per punt return but is expected to improve with experience.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Cardinals have more questions in 2018 than they've had during any season of Petrino's second tour of duty at the school. Louisville must solve significant issues on defense and replace a former Heisman-winning quarterback. And they must do so against a schedule that begins with Alabama in Orlando and includes a road trip to Clemson. Another season in the middle of the ACC Atlantic pack looms.



JAYLEN SMITH

"We were looking at (Jawon) Pass the other day. Big kid, stands tall in the pocket, good arm. Bob (Petrino) will have him ready to play."

— An opposing ACC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)					
WR	9	**Jaylen Smith (Sr.)**	84	Josh Johnson (So.)	
WR	5	**Seth Dawkins (Jr.)**	2	Corey Reed (So.)	
WR	7	**Dez Fitzpatrick (So.)**	82	Keion Wakefield (So.)	
LT	77	Linwood Foy (Sr.)	71	Toryque Bateman (Fr.)	
LG	79	**Kenny Thomas (Sr.)**	61	Caleb Chandler (Fr.)	
C	75	**Robbie Bell (So.)**	63	Nate Scheler (Jr.)	
RG	72	**Lukayus McNeil (Sr.)**	66	Cole Bentley (So.)	
RT	73	**Mekhi Becton (So.)**	60	Tyler Haycraft (Jr.)	
TE	83	Micky Crum (Sr.)	85	Jordan Davis (Jr.)	
QB	4	Jawon Pass (So.)	3	Malik Cunningham (Fr.)	
RB	25	Dae Williams (So.)	33	Colin Wilson (Fr.)	
DEFENSE (2)					
DE	98	Tabarious Peterson (So.)	41	Michael Boykin (So.)	
DT	94	G.G. Robinson (Jr.)	62	Derek Dorsey (So.)	
DT	96	Henry Famurewa (Sr.)	59	Caleb Tillman (So.)	
DE	58	Jon Greenard (Jr.)	53	Amonte Caban (Jr.)	
LB	21	London Iakopo (Sr.)	5	Robert Hicks (Fr.)	
LB	17	**Dorian Etheridge (So.)**	42	Isaac Stewart (Sr.)	
LB	9	C.J. Avery (So.)	13	P.J. Blue (So.)	
CB	6	**Russ Yeast (So.)**	2	Chandler Jones (Fr)	
CB	35	Lamarques Thomas (Jr.)	39	Aaron Floyd (Sr.)	
SS	30	Khane Pass (Jr.)		Marlon Character (Jr.)	
FS	11	Dee Smith (Sr.)	4	TreSean Smith (So.)	
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K	45	Blanton Creque (Jr.)	**KR**	5 Seth Dawkins (Jr.)	
P	28	Mason King (Jr.)	**PR**	6 Russ Yeast (So.)	

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Jawon Pass, 33-23-238-0, 2 TDs
Rushing: Dae Williams, 38 att., 235 yds., 3 TDs
Receiving: Jaylen Smith, 60 rec., 980 yds., 7 TDs
Tackles: Dorian Etheridge 83
Sacks: Jon Greenard, 7.0
Interceptions: TreSean Smith, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Bobby Petrino
Record at School: 75-27 (8 years)
Career Record: 117-48 (13 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Lonnie Galloway, Mike Summers
Defensive Coordinator: Brian VanGorder
Louisville, KY • Papa John's Cardinal Stadium (65,000)

NC State Wolfpack

National Forecast: **33** • ACC Atlantic Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **8-4, 4-4 ACC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	James Madison
Sept.	8	Georgia State
Sept.	15	West Virginia
Sept.	22	at Marshall
Sept.	29	Virginia
Oct.	6	Boston College
Oct.	20	at Clemson
Oct.	27	at Syracuse
Nov.	3	Florida State
Nov.	8	Wake Forest
Nov.	17	at Louisville
Nov.	24	at North Carolina

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 9-4, 6-2 ACC

Sept.	2	vs. South Carolina #	L	28-35
Sept.	9	Marshall	W	37-20
Sept.	16	Furman	W	49-16
Sept.	23	at Florida State	W	27-21
Sept.	30	Syracuse	W	33-25
Oct.	5	Louisville	W	39-25
Oct.	14	at Pittsburgh	W	35-17
Oct.	28	at Notre Dame	L	14-35
Nov.	4	Clemson	L	31-38
Nov.	11	at Boston College	W	17-14
Nov.	18	at Wake Forest	L	24-30
Nov.	25	North Carolina	W	33-21
Dec.	29	vs. Arizona State %	W	52-31

#Charlotte %Sun Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Payton Wilson, OLB, Hillsborough, NC
2. Ricky Person Jr., RB, Wake Forest, NC
3. Alim McNeill, DT, Raleigh, NC
4. Taiyon Palmer, CB, Lawrenceville, GA
5. De'Von Graves, CB, Appomattox, VA
6. Devin Leary, QB, Sicklerville, NJ
7. Jasiah Provillon, WR, Irvington, NJ
8. Devin Carter, WR, Clayton, NC
9. Joe Babros, DE, Mission Viejo, CA*
10. Joseph Boletepeli, DE, Wake Forest, NC

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	32.2 ppg	4	40
Rushing	176.4 ypg	6	50
Passing	275.4 ypg	4	29
Total	451.8 ypg	4	25
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	25.2 ppg	7	50
Rushing	131.0 ypg	3	26
Passing	253.2 ypg	12	104
Total	384.2 ypg	9	58
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
+8	+0.62	2	22

STAT CORNER

68

Ryan Finley completed 68 percent of his passes on third-and-7 or more with an interception rate of only 1.2 percent.

OFFENSE With quarterback Ryan Finley, his top three receivers and three starters on the line back, the NC State offense is in position to carry the load in 2018. Finley decided a sixth year of college was better than a jump to the NFL. The 6'4", 210-pound graduate transfer threw for 3,518 yards and completed 65.1 percent of his passes in 2017, his second year as the Wolfpack starter. He threw for 17 touchdowns with six interceptions.

He didn't compile those numbers without some help. "There's no doubt we have the best receiving corps in the ACC," Finley says. Kelvin Harmon has developed into Finley's favorite target. What the athletic 6'3", 213-pound junior lacks in speed, he makes up for in his ability to win 50-50 balls. Harmon led the Wolfpack with 1,017 yards on 69 receptions last season. He also caught four touchdowns. Junior Jakobi Meyers was a breakout performer last season and is in for a bigger role with the loss of Jaylen Samuels. A converted quarterback, Meyers is elusive with the ball and has breakaway speed. He caught 63 passes for 727 yards with five touchdowns.

Coach Dave Doeren is hoping senior Reggie Gallaspy, who ran for 506 yards and seven TDs last season, can stay healthy and develop into a workhorse back. Gallaspy has had nagging foot and knee injuries slow him throughout his first three seasons. The Pack would love for him to be the program's third 1,000-yard back in three years (Nyheim Hines in 2017 and Matthew Dayes in 2016). Ricky Person, a four-star recruit from nearby Wake Forest, has speed to burn and could help to replace Hines' big-play potential.

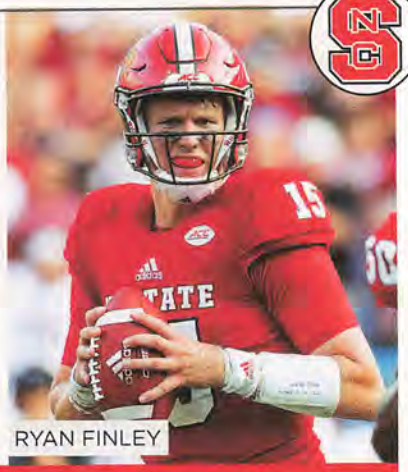
DEFENSE The Wolfpack have to replace eight starters on defense, including defensive end Bradley Chubb, the ACC Defensive Player of the Year. Senior end Darian Roseboro leads a rebuilt group that will try to improve against the pass (No. 104 in the country) while remaining strong against the run (No. 26). Space eaters Eurndraus Bryant and Shug Frazier, who both played a lot of snaps as backups last season, will help in the middle, but depth is a concern.

Senior linebacker Germaine Pratt has a knack for the big play but will need to be more consistent. Sophomore Louis Acceus will be counted on to replace Jerod Fernandez, the team's top tackler, at middle linebacker.

The secondary struggled with injuries and inexperience last season and never really stabilized. Junior cornerback Nick McCloud is the best of the returning bunch, which should get a boost from Tennessee transfer Stephen Griffin at safety.

SPECIALISTS Hines was the team's top rusher but will be missed even more in the return game. There are no obvious replacements. Freshman Christopher Dunn will be relied on to solve the program's ongoing kicking woes, although both Kyle Bambard and Carson Wise — who combined to go 10-of-20 on field goals last season — are still with the team. There have been no such problems in the punting game. Steady senior A.J. Cole returns for his fourth year as the starter.

FINAL ANALYSIS NC State got a preview of life without Chubb in the Sun Bowl. The offense did the heavy lifting behind Finley and the receivers and put up 52 points in a win over Arizona State. With so many personnel changes on defense, the same formula will have to work in 2018 for the Wolfpack to avoid a step back after their first top-25 finish under Doeren and only third in the past 20 years.



RYAN FINLEY

"They've got it rolling on offense. Once they found their guy in (Ryan) Finley, it didn't take long to put the pieces around him."

— An opposing ACC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	1	**Stephen Louis (Sr.)**	86	Emeka Emezie (So.)
WR	3	**Kelvin Harmon (Jr.)**	19	C.J. Riley (So.)
WR	11	Jakobi Meyers (Jr.)	87	Thayer Thomas (Fr.)
LT	53	**Tyler Jones (Sr.)**	72	Philip Walton (Jr.)
LG	70	**Terronne Prescod (Sr.)**	62	Bryson Speas (Fr.)
C	65	**Garrett Bradbury (Sr.)**	71	Joe Sculthorpe (So.)
RG	66	Josh Fedd-Jackson (So.)	76	Harrison Gee (So.)
RT	67	Justin Witt (So.)	74	Emanuel McGirt (Jr.)
TE	42	Dylan Autenrieth (So.)	28	Dylan Parham (So.)
QB	15	**Ryan Finley (Sr.)**	7	Matt McKay (Fr.)
RB	25	Reggie Gallaspy (Sr.)	20	Ricky Person (Fr.)

DEFENSE (3)

DE	39	James Smith-Williams (Jr.)	52	Ibrahim Kante (Fr.)
DT	90	Shug Frazier (So.)	73	Grant Gibson (Fr.)
DT	91	Eurndraus Bryant (Sr.)	92	Larrell Murchison (Jr.)
DE	45	Darian Roseboro (Sr.)	44	Joe Babros (Jr.)
MLB	2	Louis Acceus (So.)	41	Isaiah Moore (Fr.)
OLB	3	Germaine Pratt (Sr.)	36	Brock Miller (So.)
CB	4	**Nick McCloud (Jr.)**	15	Chris Ingram (So.)
CB	8	Maurice Trowell (Sr.)	30	Markel Valdez (So.)
NB	21	Stephen Griffin (Jr.)	7	Freddie Phillips (Jr.)
SS	31	**Jarius Morehead (Jr.)**	22	Isaiah Stallings (So.)
FS	14	Dexter Wright (Sr.)	34	**Tim Kidd-Glass (Jr.)**

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	32	Christopher Dunn (Fr.)	KR	8	Maurice Trowell (Sr.)
P	90	A.J. Cole (Sr.)	PR	87	Thayer Thomas (Fr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Ryan Finley, 479-312-3,518-6, 17 TDs
Rushing: Reggie Gallaspy, 116 att., 506 yds., 7 TDs
Receiving: Kelvin Harmon, 69 rec., 1,017 yds., 4 TDs
Tackles: Jarius Morehead, 80
Sacks: Darian Roseboro, 2.5
Interceptions: Germaine Pratt, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Dave Doeren
Record at School: 34-30 (5 years)
Career Record: 57-34 (7 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Eliah Drinkwitz
Defensive Coordinators: Dave Huxtable, Ted Roof
Raleigh, NC • Carter-Finley Stadium (57,583)

Chris Keane

Syracuse Orange

National Forecast: **66** • ACC Atlantic Prediction: **7** • Projected Record: **6-6, 3-5 ACC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at Western Michigan
Sept.	8	Wagner
Sept.	15	Florida State
Sept.	22	Connecticut
Sept.	29	at Clemson
Oct.	6	at Pittsburgh
Oct.	20	North Carolina
Oct.	27	NC State
Nov.	3	at Wake Forest
Nov.	9	Louisville
Nov.	17	vs. Notre Dame #
Nov.	24	at Boston College

#Bronx, NY

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 4-8, 2-6 ACC

Sept.	1	Central Connecticut	W	50-7
Sept.	9	Middle Tennessee	L	23-30
Sept.	16	Central Michigan	W	41-17
Sept.	23	at LSU	L	26-35
Sept.	30	at NC State	L	25-33
Oct.	7	Pittsburgh	W	27-24
Oct.	13	Clemson	W	27-24
Oct.	21	at Miami	L	19-27
Nov.	4	at Florida State	L	24-27
Nov.	11	Wake Forest	L	43-64
Nov.	18	at Louisville	L	10-56
Nov.	25	Boston College	L	14-42

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Trill Williams, ATH, Yonkers, NY
2. Qadir White, OT, Bronx, NY
3. Ed Hendrix, WR, Washington, DC
4. Cam Jonas, S, West Palm Beach, FL
5. Jarveon Howard, RB, Columbia, MS
6. Tre Allison, OLB, Tyler, TX
7. Taj Harris, WR, Beverly, NJ
8. Chance Amie, QB, Flint, TX
9. Carlos Vettorello, OG, Detroit, MI
10. Andre Cisco, S, Valley Stream, NY

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	27.4 ppg	9	75
Rushing	161.5 ypg	9	70
Passing	294.8 ypg	2	18
Total	456.3 ypg	3	23
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	32.2 ppg	14	98
Rushing	196.7 ypg	12	99
Passing	247.3 ypg	11	98
Total	444.0 ypg	13	106
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
-12	-1.00	14	123

STAT CORNER

21.1

Syracuse snapped the ball every 21.1 seconds, the fastest tempo in the country. The national average in 2017: 1 in 25.8 seconds.

OFFENSE Quarterback Eric Dungey returns with three years of starting experience and a growing national appreciation for his toughness and playmaking ability. But Dungey, who has yet to finish a season healthy, has legitimate competition for the starting job in redshirt freshman Tommy DeVito, the most accurate signal caller in SU's quarterback room.

Competition is a theme for the offense, which features two experienced running backs in senior Dontae Strickland and junior Moe Neal who understand that they are expected to improve production on the ground.

At receiver, Devin Butler and Nykeim Johnson lead a group of largely inexperienced players. Both have top-end speed, but Butler needs to become more consistent — both in his technique and simply catching the ball — while Johnson must learn to combat physicality at the line of scrimmage. The X-factor here is senior Antwan Cordy, a free safety who missed most of the last two years due to injury and saw time at slot this spring.

Senior tight end Ravian Pierce could become the most reliable pass catcher on the roster — especially if the offensive line can be trusted more in pass protection. That's where the real key to increased production lies. The Orange get senior guard Aaron Roberts back from injury, return five players with at least a year of starting experience and added former Texas A&M tackle Koda Martin as a graduate transfer.

DEFENSE Senior nose tackle Chris Slayton has developed into one of the most dominant and underrated forces in the ACC. The soft-spoken 320-pounder squats 700 pounds and has the lateral quickness to chase down runners on the perimeter. And for once, Syracuse has a pair of experienced edge rushers in juniors Kendall Coleman and Alton Robinson.

The strength of last year's team — linebackers — could be the weakest position group in 2018. An entirely new rotation is expected to feature junior college additions Ryan Guthrie and Lakiem Williams.

The secondary seems poised to avoid the struggles that have plagued the group the last two seasons. Starters Chris Fredrick, Scoop Bradshaw and Evan Foster are back, while Cordy could contribute at free safety or nickel. Sophomore Devon Clarke and redshirt freshman Ifeatu Melifonwu are also options at free safety.

SPECIALISTS Sterling Hofrichter is in line to do something no Orange player has done since 2000 — pull double duty as the team's punter and placekicker. Hofrichter has been one of the ACC's better punters in each of his two seasons and took about one-third of the team's practice reps at placekicker last year. Sean Riley should serve as the primary return man for the third straight year.

FINAL ANALYSIS Syracuse enters Year 3 of the Dino Babers era with reason to believe that a four-year bowl drought could end this fall. The Orange bring back experienced lines, have quality quarterback depth and feature an experienced secondary. The schedule is slightly less of a gauntlet, too.

There are questions, though, on both sides of the ball. How will SU replace its linebackers, including three-time captain Zaire Franklin? Can the receiving corps pick up the production that graduated with Steve Ishmael and Erv Philips?

This projects to be a season in which Babers' reputation begins to take shape. A postseason appearance would invite talk of a contract extension. But another disappointing finish would hurt much more than the last two seasons.



ERIC DUNGEY

Tom DiPace

"This is the perfect example of what the right system with the right players can do. They play fast, they spread you out and they're aggressive on offense."

— An opposing ACC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)				
WR	5	**Devin Butler (Jr.)**		Ed Hendrix (Fr.)
WR	87	Sharod Johnson (Fr.)	17	Jamal Custis (Sr.)
WR	82	Nykeim Johnson (So.)	10	Sean Riley (Jr.)
LT	60	**Cody Conway (Sr.)**	69	Patrick Davis (So.)
LG	59	Aaron Roberts (Sr.)	64	Colin Byrne (Jr.)
C	68	**Airon Servais (So.)**	75	**Sam Heckel (So.)**
RG	63	**Evan Adams (Jr.)**	57	Dakota Davis (Fr.)
RT		Koda Martin (Sr.)	77	Mike Clark (So.)
TE	6	**Ravian Pierce (Sr.)**	89	Aaron Hackett (So.)
QB	2	**Eric Dungey (Sr.)**	13	Tommy DeVito (Fr.)
RB	4	**Dontae Strickland (Sr.)**	21	Moe Neal (Jr.)
DEFENSE (6)				
DE	55	**Kendall Coleman (Jr.)**	97	Brandon Berry (Jr.)
DT	95	**Chris Slayton (Sr.)**	85	Josh Black (So.)
NT	98	McKinley Williams (Jr.)	36	Chris Elmore (So.)
DE	94	**Alton Robinson (Jr.)**	57	Kingsley Jonathan (So.)
WLB	12	Andrew Armstrong (Jr.)	42	Tyrell Richards (Fr.)
MLB	41	Ryan Guthrie (Sr.)	46	Lakiem Williams (Jr.)
SLB	25	Kielan Whitner (Sr.)	27	Nadarius Fagan (So.)
CB	3	**Chris Fredrick (Jr.)**		Trill Williams (Fr.)
CB	18	**Scoop Bradshaw (Jr.)**	43	Ifeatu Melifonwu (Fr.)
SS	14	**Evan Foster (Jr.)**	26	Tyrone Perkins (Sr.)
FS	8	Antwan Cordy (Sr.)	11	Devon Clarke (So.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	10	Sterling Hofrichter (Jr.)	**KR**	10 Sean Riley (Jr.)
P	10	Sterling Hofrichter (Jr.)	**PR**	10 Sean Riley (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Eric Dungey, 377-225-2,495-9, 14 TDs
Rushing: Eric Dungey, 143 att., 595 yds., 9 TDs
Receiving: Devin Butler, 33 rec., 327 yds., 1 TD
Tackles: Evan Foster, 64
Sacks: Alton Robinson, 5.0
Interceptions: Evan Foster, Chris Fredrick 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Dino Babers
Record at School: 8-16 (2 years)
Career Record: 45-32 (6 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Mike Lynch
Defensive Coordinator: Brian Ward
Syracuse, NY • Carrier Dome (49,262)

Wake Forest Demon Deacons

National Forecast: **37** • ACC Atlantic Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **7-5, 4-4 ACC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug. 30	at Tulane	
Sept. 8	Towson	
Sept. 13	Boston College	
Sept. 22	Notre Dame	
Sept. 29	Rice	
Oct. 6	Clemson	
Oct. 20	at Florida State	
Oct. 27	at Louisville	
Nov. 3	Syracuse	
Nov. 8	at NC State	
Nov. 17	Pittsburgh	
Nov. 24	at Duke	

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 4-4 ACC

Aug. 31	Presbyterian	W	51-7
Sept. 9	at Boston College	W	34-10
Sept. 16	Utah State	W	46-10
Sept. 23	at Appalachian State	W	20-19
Sept. 30	Florida State	L	19-26
Oct. 7	at Clemson	L	14-28
Oct. 21	at Georgia Tech	L	24-38
Oct. 28	Louisville	W	42-32
Nov. 4	at Notre Dame	L	37-48
Nov. 11	at Syracuse	W	64-43
Nov. 18	NC State	W	30-24
Nov. 25	Duke	L	23-31
Dec. 29	vs. Texas A&M #	W	55-52
			#Belk Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Mike Edwards, OT, Hope Mills, NC
2. Marquis Alston Jr., CB, Smyrna, GA
3. Ken Dicks III, CB, Suwanee, GA
4. Sam Hartman, QB, Charlotte, NC
5. Kelijiha Brown, DT, Saluda, SC
6. Michael Jurgens, OG, Damascus, MD
7. DeVonte Gordon, OT, Washington, DC
8. Peyton Woulard, S, Suwanee, GA
9. Ryan Smenda, ILB, Orange Park, FL
10. Courtney McKinney, RB, Biscoe, NC

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	35.3 ppg	2	21
Rushing	188.9 ypg	5	37
Passing	276.8 ypg	3	28
Total	465.8 ypg	2	17
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	28.3 ppg	11	76
Rushing	185.8 ypg	10	89
Passing	271.5 ypg	14	119
Total	457.3 ypg	14	113
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
+8	+0.62	2	22

STAT CORNER

6.3

Wake went from averaging 4.6 yards per play (125th in FBS) to 6.3 in 2017 (26th), the largest improvement in the Power 5.

OFFENSE After historically bad offenses under coach Dave Clawson, the Deacons picked up the pace and rode the top-scoring team in program history to eight wins, including a bowl victory over Texas A&M. Once forced to play inexperienced, undersized linemen, Clawson finally started to reap the benefits of their experience, and that should continue.

"We've got four fifth-year seniors on the offensive line," Clawson says. "The improvement was huge. Those guys allowed all that to happen." The line returns all five starters, including three who earned All-ACC honors. However, only one non-starter has seen significant action.

At quarterback, John Wolford overcame doubts about his talent and his health and embraced the run-pass option to finish 12th nationally in total offense. The staff's challenge is to repeat that with Kendall Hinton, who faces the same questions but without the same experience. The dynamic Hinton beat out Wolford in 2016 before suffering a knee injury. He offers more as a runner and has a bigger arm, but he's struggled to stay in the pocket and be accurate.

Matt Colburn emerged at running back to top 120 yards in four of the final six games. He's backed by bruising junior Cade Carney and redshirt freshman Christian Beal, who should add speed and receiving ability.

Greg Dortch had a spectacular season in the slot before a punctured small intestine sidelined him. Dortch and record-setting tight end Cam Serigne drew so much attention that the whole passing game thrived. Wake's biggest struggle will be to replace Serigne.

DEFENSE Last year's defense took a step back under new coordinator Jay Sawvel and two new assistants, but Clawson is confident that continuity can overcome the loss of five starters. "At times [the new coaches] weren't on the same page," he says. "All these guys have had a year; we've looked at it, we see our mistakes."

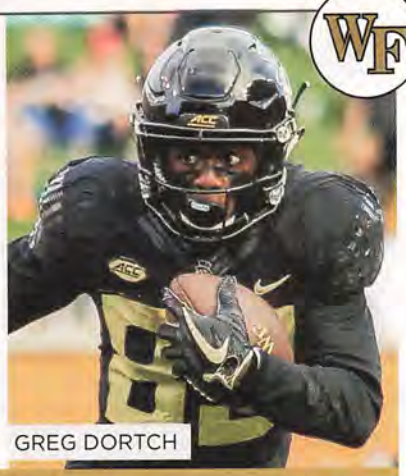
Ends Duke Ejiofor and Wendell Dunn (81 starts combined) are gone, so the line's strength will become the interior, where fifth-year seniors Willie Yarbary and Zeek Rodney are backed by the fast-rising Sulaiman Kamara. On the outside, the staff believes Carlos Basham can be a disruptor.

Clawson calls linebacker "the position of greatest concern." Gone are two starters, and returning Demetrius Kemp struggled in his pass-coverage role, which could mean a move inside. The Deacons have little experience, although Justin Strnad had some big late-season moments.

Over the season's final six games, the Deacons allowed an average of 380 passing yards. Then the best of the unit, safety Jessie Bates, turned pro early. Cornerback Essang Bassey has All-ACC potential, and safety Cameron Glenn is solid. But the Deacons will move converted receiver Chuck Wade into Bates' role and hope to develop some depth.

SPECIALISTS The Deacons lose All-ACC kicker Mike Weaver, which could force punter Dom Maggio into double duty. True freshman Nick Sciba the only other option. Dortch's speed revitalized the return games.

FINAL ANALYSIS The building blocks are there for a third straight bowl appearance. That starts on both lines, where Wake finally boasts talent and experience. Depth is always a concern, and a couple key injuries could eliminate a small margin for error. Clawson has rebuilt the facilities and the culture, and this is now a program that expects to win.



GREG DORTCH

"Wake is one of the best stories in college football the last couple of years, and no one really has noticed. When (Dave) Clawson got there, it was a wreck."

— An opposing ACC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)

WR	7	**Scotty Washington (Jr.)**	14	Sage Surratt (Fr.)	
WR	17	Alex Bachman (Sr.)	88	Steven Claude (Jr.)	
WR	3	**Greg Dortch (So.)**	82	Jaquarii Roberson (Fr.)	
LT	75	**Justin Herron (Sr.)**	60	Taleni Suhren (So.)	
LG	68	**Patrick Osterhage (Sr.)**	79	Sean Maginn (So.)	
C	70	**Ryan Anderson (Sr.)**	71	Nathan Gilliam (Jr.)	
RG	74	**Phil Haynes (Sr.)**	58	Tyler Watson (So.)	
RT	73	**Jake Benzinger (Jr.)**	63	Je'Vionte' Nash (So.)	
TE	86	Jack Freudenthal (Jr.)	23	Brandon Chapman (So.)	
QB	2	Kendall Hinton (Jr.)	12	Jamie Newman (So.)	
RB	22	**Matt Colburn (Sr.)**	36	Cade Carney (Jr.)	

DEFENSE (6)

DE	18	Carlos Basham (So.)	94	Manny Walker (So.)	
DT	48	**Willie Yarbary (Sr.)**	54	Elontae Bateman (Jr.)	
NT	93	**Zeek Rodney (Sr.)**	90	Sulaiman Kamara (So.)	
DE	51	Chris Calhoun (Sr.)	91	Mike Allen (Fr.)	
ROV	30	Ja'Cquez Williams (So.)	42	Jake Simpson (So.)	
MLB	34	**Demetrius Kemp (Sr.)**	35	Nate Mays (Jr.)	
BUCK	23	Justin Strnad (Jr.)	46	DJ Taylor (So.)	
CB	4	**Amari Henderson (Jr.)**	24	Ja'Sir Taylor (So.)	
CB	21	**Essang Bassey (Jr.)**	20	Coby Davis (Fr.)	
SS	2	**Cameron Glenn (Sr.)**	17	Traveon Redd (So.)	
FS	9	Chuck Wade (Sr.)	12	Luke Masterson (So.)	

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	48	Dom Maggio (Jr.)	**KR**	3	Greg Dortch (So.)
P	48	Dom Maggio (Jr.)	**PR**	3	Greg Dortch (So.)

***Returning Starters in Bold**

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Kendall Hinton, 47-27-399-0, 4 TDs
Rushing: Matt Colburn, 166 att., 904 yds., 7 TDs
Receiving: Greg Dortch, 53 rec., 722 yds., 9 TDs
Tackles: Cameron Glenn, 98
Sacks: Justin Strnad, 4.5
Interceptions: Essang Bassey, 3; Justin Strnad, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Dave Clawson
Record at School: 21-29 (4 years)
Career Record: 111-109 (18 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Warren Ruggiero
Defensive Coordinator: Jay Sawvel
Winston-Salem, NC • BB&T Field (31,500)

AP

Duke **Blue Devils**

National Forecast: **65** • ACC Coastal Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **6-6, 4-4 ACC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Army
Sept.	8	at Northwestern
Sept.	15	at Baylor
Sept.	22	NC Central
Sept.	29	Virginia Tech
Oct.	13	at Georgia Tech
Oct.	20	Virginia
Oct.	27	at Pittsburgh
Nov.	3	at Miami
Nov.	10	North Carolina
Nov.	17	at Clemson
Nov.	24	Wake Forest

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 3-5 ACC

Sept.	2	NC Central	W	60-7
Sept.	9	Northwestern	W	41-17
Sept.	16	Baylor	W	34-20
Sept.	23	at North Carolina	W	27-17
Sept.	29	Miami	L	6-31
Oct.	7	at Virginia	L	21-28
Oct.	14	Florida State	L	10-17
Oct.	21	Pittsburgh	L	17-24
Oct.	28	at Virginia Tech	L	3-24
Nov.	11	at Army	L	16-21
Nov.	18	Georgia Tech	W	43-20
Nov.	25	at Wake Forest	W	31-23
Dec.	26	vs. Northern Illinois #W		36-14

#Quick Lane Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Tahj Rice, DE, Louisville, KY
2. Gunnar Holmberg, QB, Wake Forest, NC
3. Nate Thompson, S, Sanford, NC
4. Casey Holman, OT, Snellville, GA
5. Rocky Shelton, OLB, Fort Lauderdale, FL
6. Ken Torain, CB, Tampa, FL
7. Shaka Heyward, OLB, Hoschton, GA
8. Dennis Smith, WR, Gaffney, SC
9. Jeremiah Lewis, CB, Plano, TX
10. Elijah Brown, DT, Charlotte, NC

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	26.5 ppg	10	80
Rushing	171.4 ypg	8	56
Passing	213.4 ypg	11	79
Total	384.8 ypg	10	88
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	20.2 ppg	3	21
Rushing	153.2 ypg	7	48
Passing	179.4 ypg	3	16
Total	332.6 ypg	4	21
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
0	0.00	8	64

STAT CORNER

2003

Duke has not had a player rush for at least 1,000 yards in a season since Chris Douglas ran for 1,138 in 2003 for a 4-8 team.

OFFENSE The Blue Devils have all of the makings of an excellent offense — but they did so last year as well before turning into a complete disaster in midseason when they averaged 12.2 points during a six-game losing streak. Out of nowhere, Duke recovered to average 36.7 points over the final three games, finally living up to expectations with quarterback Daniel Jones at the helm.

Duke's problems last year started on the offensive line and spread through the entire offense, with Jones making uncharacteristically bad decisions while trying to force throws to receivers who couldn't get much separation.

Despite losing three starters, coach David Cutcliffe believes the Blue Devils can actually be better up front.

"The offensive line is a little more unproven, but I think we do have depth because we've got competition there," he says. "We believe we can be better than what we've been there, but we've got to prove it."

There's a wealth of talent at the skill positions with three starters back at receiver, led by T.J. Rahming (65 catches, 795 yards). Meanwhile, sophomore Brittain Brown has the mix of speed and physicality to be Duke's best running back since Chris Douglas graduated. He rushed for 701 yards last year despite splitting time with senior Shaun Wilson.

DEFENSE Duke is as good as it's been on the front six as perhaps any time in school history, thanks to three returning starters on the line and a potential All-American at linebacker in junior Joe Giles-Harris.

Giles-Harris is joined in the middle by Ben Humphreys, and the two serve as the anchors of a defense that appears poised to build on its success last season when it finished 21st in both scoring and total defense.

The strength of last year's defense was the secondary, but that group will be the biggest cause for concern as at least three players will start in new positions. There is one proven commodity. Cornerback Mark Gilbert earned first-team All-ACC honors after intercepting six passes and breaking up another 15. Safety Jeremy McDuffie suffered a serious knee injury in November, putting his status for 2018 into question.

With so many newcomers on the back end, expect co-defensive coordinators Ben Albert and Matt Guerrieri to ratchet up the pressure even more in order to give the secondary a break.

SPECIALISTS Duke has significant issues in the kicking game after Austin Parker was dismissed from the program in December. He made 17-of-21 field goal attempts and averaged 42 yards on punts. The two kicking spots could fall to walk-ons, with Collin Wareham the favorite to be the placekicker and Jackson Hubbard expected to handle the punting. This could be an adventure — not the good kind — reminiscent of the 2016 season.

FINAL ANALYSIS There's reason to believe Duke will once again be stout on defense. It could be up to the offense — which averaged only 19.8 points in ACC games — to determine whether the Blue Devils will be a borderline bowl team or emerge as a contender in the Coastal Division. The schedule certainly gets tougher, with non-conference road games at Baylor and Northwestern and a crossover game at Clemson.

Cutcliffe likes what he sees from his group. "We know this team can run," he says. "[This] was the most physical Duke football that has been out here in quite some time. This is something we've got to build on; I'm anxious to see."



DANIEL JONES

"They didn't have a receiver who could go up and get a ball, or a guy that could get physical and get open any time he wanted to. That was a big problem."

— An opposing ACC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	3	**T.J. Rahming (Sr.)**	7	Keyston Fuller (Jr.)	
WR	5	**Jonathan Lloyd (Sr.)**	8	Aaron Young (Jr.)	
WR	82	**Chris Taylor (Sr.)**	11	Scott Bracey (So.)	
LT	70	Christian Harris (Sr.)	66	Jaylen Miller (So.)	
LG	65	**Julian Santos (Jr.)**	69	Zach Baker (Jr.)	
C	63	**Zach Harmon (Sr.)**	62	Alex Gourley (Jr.)	
RG	67	Rakavius Chambers (So.)	69	Zach Baker (Jr.)	
RT	77	Robert Kraeling (So.)	75	Liam Smith (So.)	
TE	80	**Daniel Helm (Sr.)**	81	Davis Koppenhaver (Sr.)	
QB	17	**Daniel Jones (Jr.)**	18	Quentin Harris (Jr.)	
RB	22	Brittain Brown (So.)	25	Deon Jackson (So.)	

DEFENSE (7)

DE	59	**Tre Hornbuckle (Jr.)**	86	Drew Jordan (So.)	
DT	92	**Edgar Cerenord (Sr.)**	54	Derrick Tangelo (So.)	
DT	95	Trevon McSwain (Jr.)	1	Axel Nyembwe (So.)	
DE	51	**Victor Dimukeje (So.)**	90	Terrell Lucas (Jr.)	
WLB	34	**Ben Humphreys (Sr.)**	49	Koby Quansah (Jr.)	
MLB	44	**Joe Giles-Harris (Jr.)**	41	Xander Gagnon (So.)	
CB	28	**Mark Gilbert (Jr.)**	4	Myles Hudzick (So.)	
CB	31	Josh Blackwell (Fr.)	30	Brandon Feamster (Jr.)	
ROV	33	Leonard Johnson (Fr.)	30	Brandon Feamster (Jr.)	
S	16	Dylan Singleton (Jr.)	13	**Jordan Hayes (Jr.)**	
S	10	Marquis Waters (So.)	26	Michael Carter (So.)	

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	94	Collin Wareham (Sr.)	**KR**	25	Deon Jackson (So.)
P	37	Jackson Hubbard (So.)	**PR**	3	T.J. Rahming (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Daniel Jones, 453-257-2,691-11, 14 TDs
Rushing: Brittain Brown, 130 att., 701 yds., 7 TDs
Receiving: T.J. Rahming, 65 rec., 795 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Joe Giles-Harris, 125
Sacks: Joe Giles-Harris, 4.5
Interceptions: Mark Gilbert, 6

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: David Cutcliffe
Record at School: 59-67 (10 years)
Career Record: 103-96 (16+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Zac Roper
Defensive Coordinators: Ben Albert, Matt Guerrieri
Durham, NC • Wallace Wade Stadium (40,004)

Margaret Bowles

Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets

National Forecast: **42** • ACC Coastal Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **7-5, 4-4 ACC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Alcorn State
Sept.	8	at South Florida
Sept.	15	at Pittsburgh
Sept.	22	Clemson
Sept.	29	Bowling Green
Oct.	5	at Louisville
Oct.	13	Duke
Oct.	25	at Virginia Tech
Nov.	3	at North Carolina
Nov.	10	Miami
Nov.	17	Virginia
Nov.	24	at Georgia

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-6, 4-4 ACC

Sept.	4	vs. Tennessee # (ot)	L	41-42
Sept.	9	Jacksonville State	W	37-10
Sept.	23	Pittsburgh	W	35-17
Sept.	30	North Carolina	W	33-7
Oct.	14	at Miami	L	24-25
Oct.	21	Wake Forest	W	38-24
Oct.	28	at Clemson	L	10-24
Nov.	4	at Virginia	L	36-40
Nov.	11	Virginia Tech	W	28-22
Nov.	18	at Duke	L	20-43
Nov.	25	Georgia	L	7-38

#Mercedes-Benz Stadium

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Jaylon King, ATH, Nashville, TN
2. James Graham, QB, Fitzgerald, GA
3. Justice Dingle, ILB, Bowling Green, KY
4. TK Chimedza, DT, Dacula, FL
5. Charlie Thomas, S, Thomasville, GA
6. Dontae Smith, RB, Spring Hill, TN
7. Malachi Carter, WR, Lawrenceville, GA
8. Quon Griffin, DE, Rome, GA
9. Tijai Whatley, RB, Rome, GA
10. Quez Jackson, ILB, Fort Valley, GA

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	28.1 ppg	7	70
Rushing	307.4 ypg	1	5
Passing	84.3 ypg	14	128
Total	391.6 ypg	8	74
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	26.5 ppg	8	63
Rushing	153.6 ypg	8	49
Passing	200.6 ypg	7	35
Total	354.3 ypg	5	33
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
-5	-0.45	11	101

STAT CORNER

5.97

Tech averaged just 5.97 yards to go on third downs, third in FBS and behind only two other option teams (Army and Navy).

OFFENSE The effectiveness of Georgia Tech's flexbone typically mirrors its quarterback play, which means it should be at least as good as 2017 when it ranked fifth nationally in rushing. But it could get a lot better if explosive senior TaQuon Marshall, who had six 100-yard rushing games, can become more threatening as a passer in his second season as a starter. On a team that returns six offensive linemen with starting experience and depth at running back, it's critical for Marshall to improve his accuracy from 37.1 percent last season and at least present the threat of a downfield pass. "I don't know if he's got to complete 60 or 65 percent, but if he's over 50 he's going to be pretty good," coach Paul Johnson says.

Though there are questions at receiver, where the Jackets' returning players combined for just five catches last year, Marshall should benefit from an older, deeper offensive line that struggled at times to pass protect (Marshall took 20 sacks) at the tackle positions. There's a solid nucleus up front, led by junior Parker Braun, who has developed into an All-ACC player at left guard.

While there may not be a home-run hitter in the running back group, KirVonte Benson emerged last season at B-back and is particularly effective in short-yardage situations.

DEFENSE Johnson was dissatisfied with his defense last season, so he made a big change hiring Nate Woody from Appalachian State. Johnson wants a simpler, more aggressive scheme that will improve key metrics like sacks (17) and TFLs (47), where the Jackets ranked below 100th nationally.

The switch from Ted Roof's 4-2-5 to Woody's 3-4 should unleash Tech's smaller, speedy players such as 6'3", 247-pound defensive end Anree Saint-Amour (5.5 TFLs, 2.5 sacks) and Victor Alexander (team-leading 60 tackles), who will be more of a stand-up outsider linebacker. It's a risk-reward style Johnson believes will be more effective than watching his undersized front get pushed up and down the field.

The plan could work if youngsters such as sophomore Bruce Jordan-Swilling and freshman Quez Jackson develop at linebacker, and the secondary, which lost a lot of leadership, coalesces around senior cornerback Lamont Simmons. Tre Swilling, a highly rated recruit and son of Georgia Tech all-time great Pat Swilling, could make an immediate impact coming off a redshirt.

SPECIALISTS While punter Pressley Harvin had a superb freshman season, Johnson didn't have confidence in the placekicking game last year as the Jackets attempted only 10 field goals. Shawn Davis suffered a torn ACL in October, and Brenton King made 5-of-6 (albeit with a long of only 42 yards) after that, so expect an ongoing competition into the fall. Johnson also says the return game is due for a revamp, though Brad Stewart (who handled punts) and Nathan Cottrell (kickoffs) are both back.

FINAL ANALYSIS Johnson's teams traditionally outperform expectations, but last year's 5–6 record was disappointing because a play here or there in games they led late against Tennessee, Miami or Virginia cost them a bowl berth. With nearly the entire offense returning and a defensive philosophy that should better fit the personnel, it's easy to envision those games going their way in 2018. There's never a huge margin for error at Tech, but with even small improvements in Marshall's passing, offensive line play and the kicking game, Tech should return to the postseason and factor into the ACC Coastal race.



TAQUON MARSHALL

"Paul Johnson is an acquired taste. I personally like him, and I think he gets a bad rep as a curmudgeon. But he's engaging and funny, and his players love him."

— An opposing ACC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (9)

WR	**83**	**Brad Stewart (Sr.)**	82	Adonicas Sanders (Fr.)	
WR	80	Jalen Camp (Jr.)	86	Jair Hawkins-Anderson (So.)	
LT	**53**	**Jahaziel Lee (Jr.)**	62	Bailey Ivemeyer (Jr.)	
LG	**75**	**Parker Braun (Jr.)**	60	Brad Morgan (Jr.)	
C	**55**	**Kenny Cooper (Jr.)**	59	Scott Morgan (Jr.)	
RG	70	Will Bryan (Sr.)	56	Connor Hansen (So.)	
RT	50	Andrew Marshall (Sr.)	**67**	**Jake Stickler (Sr.)**	
QB	**16**	**TaQuon Marshall (Sr.)**	7	Lucas Johnson (So.)	
BB	**30**	**KirVonte Benson (Jr.)**	15	Jerry Howard (So.)	
AB	**22**	**Clinton Lynch (Sr.)**	31	Nathan Cottrell (Jr.)	
AB	**1**	**Qua Searcy (Sr.)**	36	Omahri Jarrett (Jr.)	

DEFENSE (6)

DE	**94**	**Anree Saint-Amour (Sr.)**	89	Antwan Owens (So.)
NT	54	Kyle Cerge-Henderson (Sr.)	**97**	**Brentavious Glanton (Jr.)**
DE	**99**	**Desmond Branch (Sr.)**	96	Chris Martin (So.)
OLB	**9**	**Victor Alexander (Sr.)**	43	Tyler Cooksey (Jr.)
ILB	32	David Curry (Jr.)	49	Jakob Brashear (So.)
ILB	**51**	**Brant Mitchell (Sr.)**	12	Bruce Jordan-Swilling (So.)
OLB	41	Jaquan Henderson (So.)	44	Quez Jackson (Fr.)
CB	6	Lamont Simmons (Sr.)	33	Jaytlin Askew (So.)
CB	38	Ajani Kerr (So.)	3	Tre Swilling (Fr.)
SS	23	Jalen Johnson (Sr.)	29	Tariq Carpenter (So.)
FS	**5**	**A.J. Gray (Sr.)**	10	Christian Campbell (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	88	Shawn Davis (Jr.)	**KR**	31	Nathan Cottrell (Jr.)
P	27	Pressley Harvin (So.)	**PR**	83	Brad Stewart (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: TaQuon Marshall, 116-43-5, 10 TDs
Rushing: TaQuon Marshall, 247 att., 1,146 yds., 17 TDs
Receiving: Qua Searcy, 4 rec., 130 yds., 1 TD
Tackles: Victor Alexander, 60
Sacks: Anree Saint-Amour, 2.5
Interceptions: A.J. Gray, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Paul Johnson
Record at School: 75-54 (10 years)
Career Record: 182-93 (21 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Paul Johnson
Defensive Coordinator: Nate Woody
Atlanta, GA • Bobby Dodd Stadium (55,000)

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

Miami Hurricanes

National Forecast: **6** • ACC Coastal Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **10-3, 6-2 ACC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	2	vs. LSU #
Sept.	8	Savannah State
Sept.	15	at Toledo
Sept.	22	FIU
Sept.	27	North Carolina
Oct.	6	Florida State
Oct.	13	at Virginia
Oct.	26	at Boston College
Nov.	3	Duke
Nov.	10	at Georgia Tech
Nov.	17	at Virginia Tech
Nov.	24	Pittsburgh

#Arlington, TX

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 10-3, 7-1 ACC

Sept.	2	Bethune-Cookman	W	41-13
Sept.	23	Toledo	W	52-30
Sept.	29	at Duke	W	31-6
Oct.	7	at Florida State	W	24-20
Oct.	14	Georgia Tech	W	25-24
Oct.	21	Syracuse	W	27-19
Oct.	28	at North Carolina	W	24-19
Nov.	4	Virginia Tech	W	28-10
Nov.	11	Notre Dame	W	41-8
Nov.	18	Virginia	W	44-28
Nov.	24	at Pittsburgh	L	14-24
Dec.	2	vs. Clemson #	L	3-38
Dec.	30	vs. Wisconsin %	L	24-34

#Charlotte %Orange Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Lorenzo Lingard, RB, Orange City, FL
2. Brevin Jordan, TE, Las Vegas, NV
3. Nesta Silvera, DT, Plantation, FL
4. Mark Pope, WR, Miami, FL
5. Jarren Williams, QB, Lawrenceville, GA
6. Al Blades Jr., CB, Fort Lauderdale, FL
7. Delone Scaife Jr., OG, Miami, FL
8. Brian Hightower, WR, Calabasas, CA
9. Camron Davis, RB, Opa Locka, FL
10. Gurvan Hall Jr., S, West Palm Beach, FL

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	29.1 ppg	5	59
Rushing	160.8 ypg	10	71
Passing	242.5 ypg	6	54
Total	403.3 ypg	7	60
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	21.0 ppg	4	28
Rushing	145.8 ypg	6	43
Passing	217.1 ypg	8	56
Total	362.8 ypg	6	38
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
+13	+1.00	1	5

STAT CORNER

8.8

The havoc rate (combined TFLs, forced fumbles and passes defensed divided by total defensive plays) for Miami's D-line was 8.8%, fourth in FBS.

OFFENSE Normally, a fan base would be overjoyed about a fifth-year senior quarterback coming off a 10-win season, but Miami's love affair with Malik Rosier soured during UM's three-game losing streak to end the season (his completion percentage in those games: 44.9). Coach Mark Richt has made it clear: If Rosier can't improve his throwing accuracy, one of three freshmen — N'Kosi Perry, Cade Weldon or Jarren Williams (true freshman) — could take his job. The most likely candidate is Perry, a scrambler with a strong arm.

Whoever he is, the QB will have a bevy of weapons, including junior wideout Ahmmon Richards. He's coming off knee surgery but is expected to return to his Freshman All-America form of 2016 (he broke Michael Irvin's 31-year-old UM first-year record for receiving yards, with 934). The Canes have speed to burn with 5'10" sophomores Jeff Thomas and Mike Harley, and running backs Travis Homer and DeeJay Dallas are sub-6-foot but shifty and skilled. Freshman Brevin Jordan could make an instant impact as a fleet-footed H-back.

The offensive line is a concern, with two seniors (left tackle Tyree St. Louis and center Tyler Gauthier) and one sophomore (6'6", 350-pound right guard Navaughn Donaldson) the only sure things.

DEFENSE The Hurricanes captured the nation's attention with their gaudy Turnover Chain but lost their luster down the stretch. During their 1–3 finish, they struggled in coverage, allowing a 70.1 completion percentage and intercepting one pass (they had 16 picks in the first nine outings).

Offseason losses included two starting defensive tackles who left early (RJ McIntosh and Kendrick Norton) and top cover corner Malek Young (career-ending neck injury). Still, Miami's defense is fast and physical, and features one of the ACC's best linebacker units (juniors Shaq Quarterman, Michael Pinckney and Zach McCloud).

Defensive ends Joe Jackson and Jonathan Garvin have high-round NFL talent. All signs point to a breakout season for defensive tackle Gerald Willis, who sat out last year to address personal issues. He was a "terror" on scout team, Richt says.

If inexperienced defensive backs step up around safety Jaquan Johnson and cornerback Michael Jackson — both of whom had four interceptions as juniors — Miami's secondary should wear the chain plenty.

SPECIALISTS The kicking game is a worry after the graduation of confident kicker Michael Bagley. His replacement is freshman Bubba Baxa, who has a big leg but made just 4-of-10 field goals as a high school senior. Punter Zach Feagles (the son of retired NFL veteran Jeff Feagles) struggled last year as a freshman, but UM believes he'll grow. Expect Thomas and DeeJay Dallas to fill Braxton Berrios' shoes in the return game.

FINAL ANALYSIS Last year was a rude awakening for the Hurricanes, who elbowed their way into the College Football Playoff discussion in November only to get thrashed by Clemson in the ACC title game. No one in Coral Gables will forget that feeling, and confidence is high on campus that Miami is building the type of team that can compete with the top dogs in any conference. They're not playing at a championship level consistently, but they're showing flashes, and Richt's last two recruiting classes have been excellent. The former Miami quarterback has restored the shine to his alma mater.



AHMMON RICHARDS

"Anyone who thought (Mark Richt) was just going to pack it in and ride off into the sunset doesn't know the competitive fire in him."

— An opposing ACC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	18	Lawrence Cager (Jr.)	80	Dayall Harris (Sr.)
WR	4	Jeff Thomas (So.)	3	Mike Harley (So.)
WR	82	Ahmmon Richards (Jr.)		Mark Pope (Fr.)
LT	**78**	**Tyree St. Louis (Sr.)**	57	Kai-Leon Herbert (So.)
LG	77	Jahair Jones (Sr.)		Venzell Boulware (Jr.)
C	**74**	**Tyler Gauthier (Sr.)**	65	Corey Gaynor (So.)
RG	**55**	**Navaughn Donaldson (So.)**	51	Delone Scaife (Fr.)
RT	70	George Brown (Jr.)	75	Zalon'tae Hillery (Fr.)
TE		Brevin Jordan (Fr.)	**87**	**Michael Irvin II (Jr.)**
QB	**12**	**Malik Rosier (Sr.)**	5	N'Kosi Perry (Fr.)
RB	**24**	**Travis Homer (Jr.)**	13	DeeJay Dallas (So.)

DEFENSE (7)

DE	**99**	**Joe Jackson (Jr.)**	31	Demetrius Jackson (Sr.)
DT	9	Gerald Willis (Sr.)	96	Jon Ford (So.)
DT	93	Pat Bethel (Jr.)		Tito Odenigbo (Sr.)
DE	97	Jonathan Garvin (So.)	15	Greg Rousseau (Fr.)
SLB	**53**	**Zach McCloud (Jr.)**	11	De'Andre Wilder (So.)
MLB	**55**	**Shaq Quarterman (Jr.)**	44	Bradley Jennings (So.)
WLB	**56**	**Michael Pinckney (Jr.)**	35	Mike Smith (Sr.)
CB	**28**	**Michael Jackson (Sr.)**	3	Gilbert Frierson (Fr.)
CB	2	Trajan Bandy (So.)	6	Jhavonte Dean (Sr.)
S	**4**	**Jaquan Johnson (Sr.)**	5	Amari Carter (So.)
S	**22**	**Sheldrick Redwine (Sr.)**	20	Robert Knowles (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K		Bubba Baxa (Fr.)	**KR**	4 Jeff Thomas (So.)
P	18	Zach Feagles (So.)	**PR**	13 DeeJay Dallas (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Malik Rosier, 415-224-3,120-14, 26 TDs
Rushing: Travis Homer, 163 att., 966 yds., 8 TDs
Receiving: Ahmmon Richards, 24 rec., 439 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: Jaquan Johnson, 96
Sacks: Joe Jackson, 6.5
Interceptions: Jaquan Johnson, 4; Michael Jackson, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mark Richt
Record at School: 19-7 (2 years)
Career Record: 164-58 (17 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Thomas Brown
Defensive Coordinator: Manny Diaz
Coral Gables, FL • Hard Rock Stadium (65,326)

Tom DiPace

North Carolina Tar Heels

National Forecast: **69** • ACC Coastal Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **4-8, 2-6 ACC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at California
Sept.	8	at East Carolina
Sept.	15	UCF
Sept.	22	Pittsburgh
Sept.	27	at Miami
Oct.	13	Virginia Tech
Oct.	20	at Syracuse
Oct.	27	at Virginia
Nov.	3	Georgia Tech
Nov.	10	at Duke
Nov.	17	Western Carolina
Nov.	24	NC State

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 3-9, 1-7 ACC

Sept.	2	California	L	30-35
Sept.	9	Louisville	L	35-47
Sept.	16	at Old Dominion	W	53-23
Sept.	23	Duke	L	17-27
Sept.	30	at Georgia Tech	L	7-33
Oct.	7	Notre Dame	L	10-33
Oct.	14	Virginia	L	14-20
Oct.	21	at Virginia Tech	L	7-59
Oct.	28	Miami	L	19-24
Nov.	9	at Pittsburgh	W	34-31
Nov.	18	Western Carolina	W	65-10
Nov.	25	at NC State	L	21-33

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. William Barnes, OT, Apopka, FL
2. Jordyn Adams, WR, Cary, NC
3. Dyami Brown, WR, Charlotte, NC
4. Avery Jones, OG, Havelock, NC
5. Jace Ruder, QB, Norton, KS
6. Antoine Green, WR, Rockledge, FL
7. Chris Collins, DE, Richmond, VA
8. Devon Lawrence, RB, Wake Forest, NC
9. Ed Montilus, OG, Apopka, FL
10. Matthew Flint, OLB, Gurley, AL

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	26.0 ppg	11	83
Rushing	144.2 ypg	13	90
Passing	225.4 ypg	9	70
Total	369.6 ypg	11	96
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	31.3 ppg	13	88
Rushing	213.0 ypg	14	113
Passing	223.1 ypg	9	63
Total	436.1 ypg	12	99
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
-6	-0.50	13	103

STAT CORNER

-1.1

UNC's offense averaged 8.0 yards to go on third downs, while opponents averaged 6.9. This minus-1.1 margin was 123rd in FBS.

OFFENSE North Carolina's offense has been its strength under coach Larry Fedora, but the unit struggled during an injury-marred 2017. Chief among the questions facing the team in 2018 is the identity of the starting quarterback as Chazz Surratt and Nathan Elliott battle for the position. Surratt is an exciting dual-threat talent who got off to a fast start last season, but Elliott was at the controls in the final four games when UNC played its best. Elliott lacks Surratt's size and speed, but coaches and teammates appreciate his leadership.

Regardless of who gets the nod at QB, that player will have at least one big-time target. Anthony Ratliff-Williams emerged as UNC's top receiver last season, and his speed and leaping ability allow him to make big plays on short and long passes alike. Ratliff-Williams will be joined by a trio of exciting freshman wideouts in Jordyn Adams, Dyami Brown and Antoine Green. The Tar Heels might be forced to play without senior tight end Brandon Fritts, who went down with a serious knee injury in the spring.

On the ground, UNC has a nice 1-2 punch with tailbacks Jordon Brown and Michael Carter, who combined to rush for 1,171 yards and 12 touchdowns last season on only 235 carries. Of concern, however, is who will pave their running lanes. Tackles Charlie Heck and William Sweet have starting experience, but the rest of the offensive line is unproven.

DEFENSE The Tar Heels have finished last in the ACC against the run in each of the last five seasons, a trend they need to halt in 2018. UNC returns eight of its top nine defensive linemen, including four upperclassmen rotating at the two tackle spots. Defensive end Malik Carney should be poised for a big senior year after leading the team in sacks in 2016 and '17.

UNC lost two of its top three linebackers from a year ago, but senior Cole Holcomb returns after leading the team in tackles each of the last two seasons. The Tar Heels need Jonathan Smith, who made 40 tackles in limited action a year ago, to emerge as a major contributor for a group that is mostly unproven.

In the secondary, UNC must replace stalwarts M.J. Stewart and Donnie Miles. Safety Myles Dorn, who earned extensive playing time as a freshman and sophomore, is the leader of the group after tying for the team lead with two interceptions and finishing third on the team in tackles in 2017. Cornerback K.J. Sails showed improvement as last season progressed and finished as the team leader in pass breakups.

SPECIALISTS Ratliff-Williams was an All-ACC return specialist in 2017, returning two kickoffs for TDs, an area where UNC has excelled under Fedora. Freeman Jones was solid in his first season as the placekicker, making 6-of-7 attempts inside 40 yards and recording touchbacks on over half of his kickoffs. Hunter Lent takes over as the punter after impressing in limited action a year ago.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Tar Heels have plenty of room for improvement after limping to a 3–9 record in 2017, but it remains to be seen whether they have enough talent to make much progress. Top priorities on offense are patching together a passable offensive line and getting consistent play at quarterback. On defense, UNC must avoid major breakdowns after allowing five runs of more than 50 yards and five TD passes longer than 65 yards a year ago. With a non-conference schedule that includes two road games and a matchup against UCF, a bowl game would be a good accomplishment.



ANTHONY RATLIFF-WILLIAMS

"There's no secret to beating them. They can't stop the run. If you can run the ball and keep that offense off the field, that's an easy formula."

– An opposing ACC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)				
WR	17	**A. Ratliff-Williams (Jr.)**	88	Beau Corrales (So.)
WR	19	Dazz Newsome (So.)		Jordyn Adams (Fr.)
WR	48	Thomas Jackson (Sr.)	21	Dyami Brown (Fr.)
LT	51	William Sweet (Jr.)	72	Mason Veal (Jr.)
LG	58	Nick Polino (Jr.)	77	Jonah Melton (Fr.)
C	55	Jay-Jay McCargo (So.)	70	Jonathan Trull (Sr.)
RG	57	Tyler Pritchett (So.)	68	Brian Anderson (Fr.)
RT	67	**Charlie Heck (Jr.)**	74	Jordan Tucker (Fr.)
TE	86	Carl Tucker (Jr.)	82	**Brandon Fritts (Sr.)**
QB	12	**Chazz Surratt (So.)**	11	Nathan Elliott (Jr.)
RB	2	**Jordon Brown (Jr.)**	8	Michael Carter (So.)
DEFENSE (7)				
DE	12	Tomon Fox (So.)	33	Allen Cater (Jr.)
DT	92	**Aaron Crawford (Jr.)**	49	Jeremiah Clarke (Sr.)
DT	97	Jalen Dalton (Sr.)	55	**Jason Strowbridge (Jr.)**
DE	53	**Malik Carney (Sr.)**	42	Tyrone Hopper (So.)
LB	36	**Cole Holcomb (Sr.)**	24	Malik Robinson (So.)
LB	7	Jonathan Smith (Jr.)	4	Allen Artis (Sr.)
LB	3	Dominique Ross (Jr.)	30	Matthew Flint (Fr.)
CB	5	Patrice Rene (Jr.)	26	C.J. Cotman (So.)
CB	9	**K.J. Sails (Jr.)**	11	Myles Wolfolk (So.)
FS	1	**Myles Dorn (Jr.)**	16	D.J. Ford (Jr.)
SS	29	**J.K. Britt (Sr.)**	31	Tre Shaw (So.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	98	Freeman Jones (Sr.)	**KR**	17 A. Ratliff-Williams (Jr.)
P	91	Hunter Lent (Sr.)	**PR**	17 A. Ratliff-Williams (Jr.)

***Returning Starters in Bold**

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Chazz Surratt, 183-107-1,342-3, 8 TDs
Rushing: Jordon Brown, 138 att., 613 yds., 4 TDs
Receiving: Anthony Ratliff-Williams, 35 rec., 630 yds., 6 TDs
Tackles: Cole Holcomb, 93
Sacks: Malik Carney, 5.5
Interceptions: Myles Dorn, 2; Myles Wolfolk, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Larry Fedora
Record at School: 43-34 (6 years)
Career Record: 77-53(10 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Chris Kapilovic
Defensive Coordinator: John Papuchis
Chapel Hill, NC • Kenan Memorial Stadium (52,000)

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

Pittsburgh **Panthers**

National Forecast: **43** • ACC Coastal Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **6-6, 4-4 ACC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Albany
Sept.	8	Penn State
Sept.	15	Georgia Tech
Sept.	22	at North Carolina
Sept.	29	at UCF
Oct.	6	Syracuse
Oct.	13	at Notre Dame
Oct.	27	Duke
Nov.	2	at Virginia
Nov.	10	Virginia Tech
Nov.	17	at Wake Forest
Nov.	24	at Miami

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 3-5 ACC

Sept.	2	Youngstown State (ot)	W	28-21
Sept.	9	at Penn State	L	14-33
Sept.	16	Oklahoma State	L	21-59
Sept.	23	at Georgia Tech	L	17-35
Sept.	30	Rice	W	42-10
Oct.	7	at Syracuse	L	24-27
Oct.	14	NC State	L	17-35
Oct.	21	at Duke	W	24-17
Oct.	28	Virginia	W	31-14
Nov.	9	North Carolina	L	31-34
Nov.	18	at Virginia Tech	L	14-20
Nov.	24	Miami	W	24-14

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Mychale Salahuddin, RB, Washington, DC
2. Blake Zubovic, OT, Belle Vernon, PA
3. Shocky Jacques-Louis, WR, Fort Myers, FL
4. Jake Kradel, OG, Butler, PA
5. John Morgan, DE, Upper Marlboro, MD
6. Devin Danielson, DT, Pittsburgh, PA
7. Nick Patti, QB, Westwood, NJ
8. Marquis Williams, CB, Pompano Beach, FL
9. Chase Brown, OT, Ashburn VA*
10. Judson Tallandier, CB, Upper Marlboro, MD

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	23.9 ppg	13	101
Rushing	148.5 ypg	12	86
Passing	217.7 ypg	10	73
Total	366.2 ypg	12	97
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	26.6 ppg	9	65
Rushing	142.4 ypg	5	41
Passing	254.2 ypg	13	106
Total	396.6 ypg	11	69
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
0	0.00	8	64

STAT CORNER

5.4

Pitt went from averaging 6.7 yards per play in 2016 (13th in FBS) to just 5.4 in 2017 (94th), the second-largest drop in the Power 5.

AP

OFFENSE Late in its regular-season finale against second-ranked Miami, Pittsburgh put the ball in the hands of then-freshman Kenny Pickett. And he delivered. On fourth-and-5 with 2:45 remaining, Pickett raced 22 yards on a naked bootleg for the game-clinching touchdown. The play convinced the Pittsburgh coaching staff that it had found its quarterback of the future. So impressive was the young man that it caused an upheaval of the roster. Quarterbacks Ben DiNucci, who started six games, and Connor MacVittie went elsewhere. The hope is that Pickett continues to evolve while transforming an offense that ranked 73rd nationally in passing, 86th in rushing and 97th in total yards.

Pickett should be aided by a backfield featuring seniors Darrin Hall (who ran for a combined 486 yards in Weeks 8-10) and Qadree Ollison. Wide receiver Rafael Araujo-Lopes provides Pickett with a sure-handed target (43 receptions, 531 yards, two scores last season), but the remainder of the unit is relatively untested. Pittsburgh is seeking a playmaker to replace speedsters Jester Weah and Quadree Henderson.

Up front, two starters return, notably honorable mention All-ACC tackle Alex Bookser. A player to watch is graduate transfer Stefano Millin, stepping in for two-time All-ACC pick Brian O'Neill at left tackle.

DEFENSE First-year coordinator Randy Bates inherits a unit that returns seven starters, including three linemen and three linebackers. The longtime linebackers coach at Northwestern has been tasked with improving a pass defense that ranked 106th nationally (254.2 ypg) and a pass rush that managed only 23 sacks. A potential game-changer up front is senior end Dewayne Hendrix, who led the Panthers in quarterback hurries with eight. The anchor is senior nose tackle Shane Roy, who had a sack and two pass breakups while starting all 12 games.

Returning linebackers Saleem Brightwell, Oluwaseun Idowu and Elijah Zeise combined for 216 tackles in '17. Those numbers could balloon under Bates, who oversaw the development of both All-American Anthony Walker Jr. and Big Ten Defensive Freshman of the Year Paddy Fisher at Northwestern. Idowu, a two-year starter and second-team All-ACC pick, led the team in tackles (94), tackles for a loss (11.5) and sacks (five). The return of Quintin Wirginis, who sat out last season, adds another high-end talent to the linebacking corps.

A pair of four-star recruits — safety Damar Hamlin and cornerback Paris Ford, both Pittsburgh natives — must live up to their pre-college reputations.

SPECIALISTS Despite converting 55- and 56-yard field goals in '17, Alex Kessman must become more consistent after connecting on just 58 percent of his attempts (11-of-19). Freshman punter Kirk Christodoulou has been tasked with replacing four-year starter and All-ACC pick Ryan Winslow.

FINAL ANALYSIS In the past two seasons, Pittsburgh has pulled off major upsets against Miami, Clemson and Penn State. But at what point do the Panthers advance past the occasional stunning win and start to develop more consistency across the board? Coach Pat Narduzzi's program took a step back in 2017. It finished 5–7 (3–5 in the ACC) after posting 8–5 records in each of his first two seasons. The mission in 2018 is to prove the program is trending upward, as was the case in 2015 and '16.



KENNY PICKETT

"They're just average on the offensive line, and that was part of the problem early on last year. They have to get better."

— An opposing ACC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (4)

WR	82	Rafael Araujo-Lopes (Sr.)	6	Aaron Matthews (Jr.)
WR	5	Tre Tipton (Jr.)	2	Maurice Ffrench (Jr.)
LT	70	Stefano Millin (Sr.)	71	Bryce Hargrove (So.)
LG	55	Chase Brown (Jr.)	66	Mike Herndon (Sr.)
C	**67**	**Jimmy Morrissey (So.)**	60	Owen Drexel (Fr.)
RG	76	Connor Dintino (Sr.)	66	Mike Herndon (Sr.)
RT	**78**	**Alex Bookser (Sr.)**	74	Jerry Drake (Fr.)
TE	86	Tyler Sear (So.)	84	Grant Carrigan (Fr.)
QB	8	Kenny Pickett (So.)	10	Ricky Town (Jr.)
RB	**22**	**Darrin Hall (Sr.)**	**37**	**Qadree Ollison (Sr.)**
RB	35	George Aston (Sr.)	21	A.J. Davis (So.)

DEFENSE (7)

DE	**8**	**Dewayne Hendrix (Sr.)**	17	Rashad Weaver (So.)
DT	**93**	**Shane Roy (Sr.)**	55	Jaylen Twyman (Fr.)
DT	34	Amir Watts (Jr.)	**10**	**Keyshon Camp (So.)**
DE	40	James Folston Jr. (Sr.)	91	Patrick Jones (So.)
OLB	**25**	**Elijah Zeise (Sr.)**	36	Chase Pine (So.)
MLB	**39**	**Saleem Brightwell (Jr.)**	58	Quintin Wirginis (Sr.)
OLB	**23**	**Oluwaseun Idowu (Sr.)**	28	Anthony McKee (Jr.)
CB	12	Paris Ford (Fr.)	4	Therran Coleman (So.)
CB	**11**	**Dane Jackson (Jr.)**	32	Phillipie Motley (Sr.)
SS	24	Phil Campbell (So.)	20	Dennis Briggs (Sr.)
FS	3	Damar Hamlin (Jr.)	27	Bricen Garner (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	97	Alex Kessman (So.)	**KR**	2	Maurice Ffrench (Jr.)
P	98	Kirk Christodoulou (Fr.)	**PR**	2	Maurice Ffrench (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Kenny Pickett, 66-39-509-1, 1 TD
Rushing: Darrin Hall, 128 att., 628 yds., 9 TDs
Receiving: Rafael Araujo-Lopes, 43 rec., 531 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Oluwaseun Idowu, 94
Sacks: Oluwaseun Idowu, 5.0
Interceptions: Dane Jackson, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Pat Narduzzi
Record at School: 21-17 (3 years)
Career Record: 21-17 (3 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Shawn Watson
Defensive Coordinator: Randy Bates
Pittsburgh, PA • Heinz Field (68,400)

Virginia Cavaliers

National Forecast: **81** • ACC Coastal Prediction: **7** • Projected Record: **4-8, 1-7 ACC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Richmond
Sept.	8	at Indiana
Sept.	15	Ohio
Sept.	22	Louisville
Sept.	29	at NC State
Oct.	13	Miami
Oct.	20	at Duke
Oct.	27	North Carolina
Nov.	2	Pittsburgh
Nov.	10	Liberty
Nov.	17	at Georgia Tech
Nov.	23	at Virginia Tech

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 6-7, 3-5 ACC

Sept.	2	William & Mary	W	28-10
Sept.	9	Indiana	L	17-34
Sept.	16	Connecticut	W	38-18
Sept.	22	at Boise State	W	42-23
Oct.	7	Duke	W	28-21
Oct.	14	at North Carolina	W	20-14
Oct.	21	Boston College	L	10-41
Oct.	28	at Pittsburgh	L	14-31
Nov.	4	Georgia Tech	W	40-36
Nov.	11	at Louisville	L	21-38
Nov.	18	at Miami	L	28-44
Nov.	24	Virginia Tech	L	0-10
Dec.	28	vs. Navy #	L	7-49

#Military Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Noah Taylor, OLB, Silver Spring, MD
2. Brennan Armstrong, QB, Shelby, OH
3. Javar Garrett, OLB, Newark, DE
4. Jaylon Baker, CB, Chattanooga, TN
5. Bryce Perkins, QB, Chandler, AZ*
6. Ugo Obasi, WR, Baltimore, MD
7. Wooby Theork-Youmans, WR, Naples, FL
8. Tavares Kelly, WR, Fort Lauderdale, FL
9. Samson Reed, DE, Laie, HI
10. Grant Misch, OLB, Sterling, VA

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	22.5 ppg	14	107
Rushing	93.5 ypg	14	128
Passing	248.7 ypg	5	51
Total	342.2 ypg	14	107
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	28.4 ppg	12	78
Rushing	199.3 ypg	13	102
Passing	165.8 ypg	2	7
Total	365.1 ypg	7	40
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
-1	-0.08	10	72

STAT CORNER

2.5

Virginia gained at least 10 yards on only 2.5 rushes per game, second worst in FBS and behind even pass-happy Washington State.

OFFENSE Kurt Benkert started at quarterback for 23 of the 25 games Bronco Mendenhall has coached at Virginia and was far and away the best option on the UVa roster for the new coaching staff — but he wasn't the perfect fit for the offense Mendenhall and coordinator Robert Anae want to run with the Cavaliers. Now, former Arizona State quarterback Bryce Perkins, who transferred to Virginia after spending last season at a junior college, gets his shot to take over behind center. He fits the mold, giving UVa a mobile, dual-threat QB who can overcome other deficiencies on the offense.

Perkins will have a pair of explosive playmakers to work with in senior Olamide Zaccheaus and junior Joe Reed. The coaching staff has to find more ways to get those two the ball in space while also developing more depth in the unit. Senior tight end Evan Butts came on late last season and might see an expanded role in the new-look offense.

The Cavaliers return workhorse ball carrier Jordan Ellis, who led the team with 836 yards and six touchdowns last season.

Once again, Virginia's offensive line figures to be the team's biggest question mark and potential weak point heading into 2018.

DEFENSE The unit loses a key star at each level. Safety Quin Blanding, linebacker Micah Kiser and defensive end Andrew Brown all were seniors last season. Still, Virginia returns plenty of experience and talent at linebacker and safety. It's the defensive front in the Cavaliers' 3-4 scheme that could be the question mark. Three of the team's top five defensive linemen from a year ago, including Brown, are gone. Virginia will need nose tackle Eli Hanback and end Mandy Alonso to build on their encouraging 2017 campaigns while developing two or three more dependable options along the defensive line.

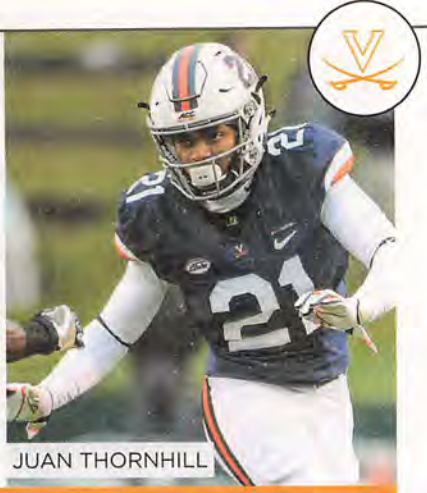
At linebacker, despite losing Kiser — who led the ACC in tackles each of the past three seasons — Mendenhall should feel fairly confident. A pair of seniors, Chris Peace and Malcolm Cook, will work at the outside positions, and junior Jordan Mack is an emerging force inside.

The Cavaliers enjoy similar depth in the secondary, where they have so many options at cornerback that it freed up senior Juan Thornhill to move back to safety.

SPECIALISTS Reed gives Virginia an explosive weapon at kick returner. He ran two kickoffs back for touchdowns last season, including a 92-yard runback against Georgia Tech and a 98-yard return against Navy on the opening kickoff of the Military Bowl. Punter Lester Coleman, one of the many pleasant surprises last season, returns after averaging 43.7 yards per kick.

FINAL ANALYSIS In Year 2 at Virginia, Mendenhall took the team from two wins to six and helped the Cavaliers reach their first bowl game since 2011. He may be hard pressed to continue that upward trajectory this season, at least in terms of wins and losses. The team lost key seniors in key spots, robbing the lineup not only of production but also of leadership.

The offensive and defensive lines are being largely rebuilt, and the entire offense figures to have a different feel as Virginia moves to a dual-threat quarterback and a scheme more reminiscent of what Mendenhall and his staff employed at BYU. There's enough depth on defense to be optimistic, and if Perkins shines at quarterback, the offense could be interesting.



JUAN THORNHILL

"It just feels like forever since Virginia has been relevant, doesn't it? ... They just lost their way as a program, and a lot of that was the lack of physicality."

— An opposing ACC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	8	Hasise Dubois (Jr.)	80	Shawn Smith (Fr.)
WR	**2**	**Joe Reed (Jr.)**		Darnell Pratt (Fr.)
WR	4	Olamide Zaccheaus (Sr.)	84	Terrell Jana (So.)
LT		Marcus Applefield (Sr.)	54	Ryan Nelson (Fr.)
LG	78	R.J. Proctor (Jr.)	65	Ben Knutson (So.)
C	**79**	**Dillon Reinkensmeyer (So.)**	72	Tyler Fannin (Fr.)
RG	**77**	**Jake Fieler (Sr.)**	64	Ben Trent (So.)
RT	69	Chris Glaser (So.)		Gerrik Vollmer (Fr.)
TE	46	Evan Butts (Sr.)	**44**	**Tanner Cowley (Jr.)**
QB		Bryce Perkins (Jr.)		Brennan Armstrong (Fr.)
RB	**1**	**Jordan Ellis (Sr.)**	26	PK Kier (So.)

DEFENSE (6)

DE	91	Mandy Alonso (So.)	57	James Trucilla (Jr.)
NT	**58**	**Eli Hanback (Jr.)**	91	Mandy Alonso (So.)
DE	16	Richard Burney (Jr.)		Tommy Christ (Fr.)
OLB	38	Charles Snowden (So.)	43	Elliott Brown (So.)
ILB	**37**	**Jordan Mack (Jr.)**	40	C.J. Stalker (Sr.)
ILB	17	Malcolm Cook (Sr)	33	Zane Zandier (So.)
OLB	**13**	**Chris Peace (Sr.)**	56	Matt Gahm (So.)
CB	**34**	**Bryce Hall (Jr.)**	94	Riah Burton (Fr.)
CB		Tim Harris (Sr.)	32	Darrius Bratton (So.)
SS	**54**	**Brenton Nelson (So.)**	20	Nick Grant (So.)
FS	**21**	**Juan Thornhill (Sr.)**	29	Joey Blount (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	95	A.J. Mejia (So.)	KR	2	Joe Reed (Jr.)
P	47	Lester Coleman (Sr.)	PR	21	Juan Thornhill (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Lindell Stone, 9-2-26-2, 0 TDs
Rushing: Jordan Ellis, 215 att., 836 yds., 6 TDs
Receiving: Olamide Zaccheaus, 85 rec., 895 yds., 5 TDs
Tackles: Jordan Mack, 114
Sacks: Chris Peace, 7.5
Interceptions: Brenton Nelson, Juan Thornhill, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Bronco Mendenhall
Record at School: 8-17 (2 years)
Career Record: 107-60 (13 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Robert Anae
Defensive Coordinators: Nick Howell, Kelly Poppinga
Charlottesville, VA • Scott Stadium (61,500)

University of Virginia Athletics

Virginia Tech **Hokies**

National Forecast: **16** • ACC Coastal Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **9-3, 5-3 ACC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	3	at Florida State
Sept.	8	William & Mary
Sept.	15	East Carolina
Sept.	22	at Old Dominion
Sept.	29	at Duke
Oct.	6	Notre Dame
Oct.	13	at North Carolina
Oct.	25	Georgia Tech
Nov.	3	Boston College
Nov.	10	at Pittsburgh
Nov.	17	Miami
Nov.	23	Virginia

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 9-4, 5-3 ACC

Sept.	3	vs. West Virginia #	W	31-24
Sept.	9	Delaware	W	27-0
Sept.	16	at East Carolina	W	64-17
Sept.	23	Old Dominion	W	38-0
Sept.	30	Clemson	L	17-31
Oct.	7	at Boston College	W	23-10
Oct.	21	North Carolina	W	59-7
Oct.	28	Duke	W	24-3
Nov.	4	at Miami	L	10-28
Nov.	11	at Georgia Tech	L	22-28
Nov.	18	Pittsburgh	W	20-14
Nov.	24	at Virginia	W	10-0
Dec.	28	vs. Oklahoma State %	L	21-30

#Landover %Camping World Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Dax Hollifield, ILB, Shelby, NC
2. Tre Turner, WR, Oak Ridge, NC
3. Quincy Patterson II, QB, Chicago, IL
4. Jeremy Webb, CB, East Mims, FL*
5. Chamarri Conner, S, Jacksonville, FL
6. Alan Tisdale, ATH, Greensboro, NC
7. James Mitchell, TE, Big Stone Gap, VA
8. Armani Chatman, ATH, Virginia Beach, VA
9. Darryle Simmons, WR, Philadelphia, PA
10. D.J. Crossen, CB, Greensboro, NC

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	ACC	NATIONAL
Scoring	28.2 ppg	6	66
Rushing	173.4 ypg	7	54
Passing	239.5 ypg	7	57
Total	412.8 ypg	6	53
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	14.8 ppg	2	4
Rushing	119.5 ypg	2	15
Passing	199.8 ypg	6	33
Total	319.3 ypg	2	13
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**ACC**	**NATIONAL**
+5	+0.38	4	30

STAT CORNER

27.2

Tech stuffed opponents at or behind the line on 27.2% of rushes, third in FBS. Tremaine Edmunds and Andrew Motuapuaka will be missed.

OFFENSE The Hokies had their ups and downs with a young group last year, and they hope that the experience will pay dividends this season. Justin Fuente finally has an incumbent at quarterback: It's Josh Jackson's job to lose after he started 13 games as a freshman in 2017 and threw for 2,991 yards with 20 touchdowns and nine interceptions, though he was inconsistent down the stretch.

He'll need help, with proven playmakers in short supply. The tailbacks haven't impressed, with Tech averaging 3.9 yards per carry last fall, next to last in the ACC. Senior Steven Peoples won't win a lot of foot races, but he's a load at 5'9", 221 pounds, and his absence was felt last year when he missed six games with an ankle injury. Expect him, Deshawn McClease and Jalen Holston to get the bulk of the carries. An offensive line that returns three starters, led by 6'7", 322-pound tackle Yosuah Nijman, could be steady.

Receiver is a major question now that the school's all-time leading pass catcher Cam Phillips is gone. Sean Savoy and Eric Kumah are expected to take the next step, and shifty senior C.J. Carroll is back. Ball State transfer Damon Hazelton, who had 505 yards as a freshman before sitting out last year, should have a big role.

DEFENSE The Hokies had one of the best defenses in the country last year, finishing fourth in points allowed at 14.8 per game. But the early NFL departures of linebacker Tremaine Edmunds, defensive tackle Tim Settle and safety Terrell Edmunds will test defensive coordinator Bud Foster's ability to reload.

Ricky Walker was every bit Settle's equal last year, an agile playmaker on the interior, and there's plenty of experience along a defensive line that routinely applies pressure. There's not much experience at linebacker. Sophomores Rayshard Ashby and Dylan Rivers got on the field on special teams last year and should have the inside track at starting, but keep an eye on prized recruit Dax Hollifield. Senior Mook Reynolds at least brings some experience at whip linebacker.

The secondary must replace three starters. Senior Adonis Alexander is a big, physical corner who has all the ability in the world if he can keep his head on straight. Caleb Farley moved back to defense after he injured his knee last August and is an intriguing prospect. At safety, Divine Deablo could be a breakout coming back from a broken foot.

SPECIALISTS Two record-setting specialists — punt returner Greg Stroman and kicker Joey Slye — are gone. Carroll has been Stroman's backup for years. Either Brian Johnson or Jordan Stout will be the kicker, but Slye's strong leg will be tough to replace. Aussie Oscar Bradburn is back at punter for a unit that allowed 47 return yards all year.

FINAL ANALYSIS Virginia Tech fans couldn't have asked for much more from Fuente in his first two years in Blacksburg, where he's gone 19–8, won a division title and seamlessly handled the transition from legend Frank Beamer. It's possible that 2018 might be his greatest challenge so far, however, with three-quarters of the roster being sophomores or younger. Fuente and his staff have recruited well, but those classes are just now starting to hit a turning point in their development.

The schedule's manageable, with Clemson rotating off, Miami at home and the Coastal Division not overwhelming, but the Hokies will need to do a lot of growing up at key positions if they're going to make a run at the division title again.



JOSH JACKSON

"Maybe it's just me, but I think Justin Fuente did the best coaching job in our league last year. They won nine games without a consistent run game."

— An opposing ACC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	**83**	**Eric Kumah (Jr.)**	8	Phil Patterson (So.)
WR	**15**	**Sean Savoy (So.)**	86	C.J. Carroll (Sr.)
WR	14	Damon Hazelton (So.)	6	Hezekiah Grimsley (So.)
LT	60	Silas Dzansi (Fr.)	79	Tyrell Smith (Jr.)
LG	62	D'Andre Plantin (Jr.)	54	Lecitus Smith (Fr.)
C	**61**	**Kyle Chung (Sr.)**	75	Zachariah Hoyt (So.)
RG	**74**	**Braxton Pfaff (Sr.)**	71	T.J. Jackson (So.)
RT	**69**	**Yosuah Nijman (Sr.)**	79	Tyrell Smith (Jr.)
TE	**29**	**Dalton Keene (So.)**	85	Chris Cunningham (Jr.)
QB	**17**	**Josh Jackson (So.)**	2	Hendon Hooker (Fr.)
RB	32	Steven Peoples (Sr.)	33	Deshawn McClease (Jr.)

DEFENSE (5)

DE	**94**	**Trevon Hill (Jr.)**	40	Emmanuel Belmar (So.)
DT	**8**	**Ricky Walker (Sr.)**	55	Jarrod Hewitt (So.)
DT	**99**	**Vinny Mihota (Sr.)**	47	Darius Fullwood (Jr.)
DE	11	Houshun Gaines (Jr.)	18	Raymon Minor (Sr.)
ILB	23	Rayshard Ashby (So.)		Dax Hollifield (Fr.)
ILB	44	Dylan Rivers (So.)	41	Jaylen Griffin (Fr.)
OLB	**6**	**Mook Reynolds (Sr.)**	7	Devon Hunter (So.)
CB	36	Adonis Alexander (Sr.)		Jeremy Webb (Jr.)
CB	3	Caleb Farley (Fr.)	5	Bryce Watts (So.)
SS	**21**	**Reggie Floyd (Jr.)**	7	Devon Hunter (So.)
FS	17	Divine Deablo (So.)	9	Khalil Ladler (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	93	Brian Johnson (So.)	**KR**	86	C.J. Carroll (Sr.)
P	91	Oscar Bradburn (So.)	**PR**	12	Henri Murphy (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Josh Jackson, 396-236-2,991-9, 20 TDs
Rushing: Deshawn McClease, 108 att., 530 yds., 3 TDs
Receiving: Sean Savoy, 39 rec., 454 yds., 4 TDs
Tackles: Reggie Floyd, 72
Sacks: Trevon Hill, 5.5
Interceptions: Reggie Floyd, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Justin Fuente
Record at School: 19-8 (2 years)
Career Record: 45-31 (6 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Brad Cornelsen
Defensive Coordinators: Bud Foster, Galen Scott
Blacksburg, VA • Lane Stadium (66,233)

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

AAC PREVIEW

East | Predicted Order of Finish | West



1 UCF **KNIGHTS** 10-3, 7-1 AAC



2 TEMPLE **OWLS** 7-5, 5-3 AAC



3 USF **BULLS** 8-4, 5-3 AAC



4 CINCINNATI **BEARCATS** 4-8, 3-5 AAC



5 CONNECTICUT **HUSKIES** 3-9, 1-7 AAC



6 EAST CAROLINA **PIRATES** 2-10, 1-7 AAC

1 MEMPHIS **TIGERS** 9-4, 6-2 AAC



2 NAVY **MIDSHIPMEN** 9-4, 5-3 AAC



3 HOUSTON **COUGARS** 7-5, 5-3 AAC



4 TULANE **GREEN WAVE** 6-6, 4-4 AAC



5 SMU **MUSTANGS** 6-6, 4-4 AAC



6 TULSA **GOLDEN HURRICANE** 4-8, 2-6 AAC



AAC Championship: **UCF over Memphis**

GAMES TO WATCH

AUG. 30
WAKE FOREST AT TULANE
Willie Fritz and the Green Wave are poised to take a step forward in 2018. A Week 1 win over an ACC team would be a great first step.

SEPT. 7
TCU AT SMU
New SMU boss Sonny Dykes will have a great opportunity to make headlines in the Metroplex when TCU makes the short trip to Gerald J. Ford Stadium.

SEPT. 8
MEMPHIS AT NAVY
The last two winners of the AAC East get together for a huge early season showdown in Annapolis. Navy holds a 2–1 advantage in the series history.

OCT. 13
UCF AT MEMPHIS
The Knights swept Memphis a year ago — but both games were in Orlando. This time, the two AAC powers meet at the Liberty Bowl.

OCT. 20
HOUSTON AT NAVY
Houston held the Mids to a season-low 291 yards in a 24–14 win at home last fall. Now, the Coogs are aiming for their first win in Annapolis.

OCT. 20
MEMPHIS AT MISSOURI
Memphis has won four of its last five regular-season games vs. Power 5 opponents, but this trip to Missouri will be a huge challenge for the Tigers' D.

Cincinnati: Joe Robbins/Getty; UConn: Steve Slade/UConn; Memphis: Joe Murphy/Memphis Athletics; Navy: Rob Carr/Getty; Houston: @UHCougarFB; Tulane: Parker Waters/Tulane Athletics; SMU: Vladimir Cherny/SMU Athletics; Tulsa: John Lew/Tulsa Athletics; Brooks: AP; All others courtesy of each school's athletic department

2018 Unit Rankings

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
CINCINNATI	8	8	11	11	6	7	11
CONNECTICUT	11	11	8	12	11	11	9
EAST CAROLINA	12	12	7	10	10	12	12
HOUSTON	4	10	9	6	1	4	3
MEMPHIS	7	1	2	1	5	3	4
NAVY	2	9	12	5	4	9	8
SMU	5	2	10	9	9	6	7
TEMPLE	6	4	4	7	3	1	5
TULANE	3	6	6	8	8	10	6
TULSA	10	5	5	4	12	8	10
UCF	1	3	1	2	7	2	1
USF	9	7	3	3	2	5	2

Recruiting by School

1. Cincinnati
2. USF
3. Tulane
4. UCF
5. Houston
6. Temple
7. SMU
8. Memphis
9. East Carolina
10. Tulsa
11. Navy
12. Connecticut



DARRELL HENDERSON, MEMPHIS

2018 Bowl Projections

Birmingham Bowl: UCF vs. UCLA
Bahamas Bowl: Memphis vs. FAU
Armed Forces Bowl: Houston vs. Kansas State
Military Bowl: Navy vs. Boston College
Cure Bowl: Temple vs. Appalachian State
Gasparilla Bowl: USF vs. Army
Frisco Bowl: Tulane vs. Toledo



SHAMARI BROOKS, TULSA

AAC Coordinator Carousel

UConn: Offense
New: John Dunn
Old: Rhett Lashlee

East Carolina: Defense
New: David Blackwell
Old: Robert Prunty

Houston: Offensive
New: Kendal Briles
Old: Brian Johnson

Houston: Defense
New: Mark D'Onofrio
Old: Mark D'Onofrio, Clay Jennings

Memphis: Offense
New: Kenny Dillingham
Old: Darrell Dickey

SMU: Offense
New: Rhett Lashlee
Old: Joe Craddock

SMU: Defense
New: Kevin Kane
Old: Van Malone

Temple: Defense
New: Andrew Thacker
Old: Taver Johnson

Tulsa: Defense
New: Bill Young
Old: Bill Young, Brian Norwood

UCF: Offense
New: Josh Heupel
Old: Troy Walters

UCF: Defense
New: Randy Shannon
Old: Erik Chinander

OCT. 27
USF AT HOUSTON
Former Texas boss Charlie Strong returns to the Lone Star State with a USF team that has won a combined 21 games in the last two seasons.

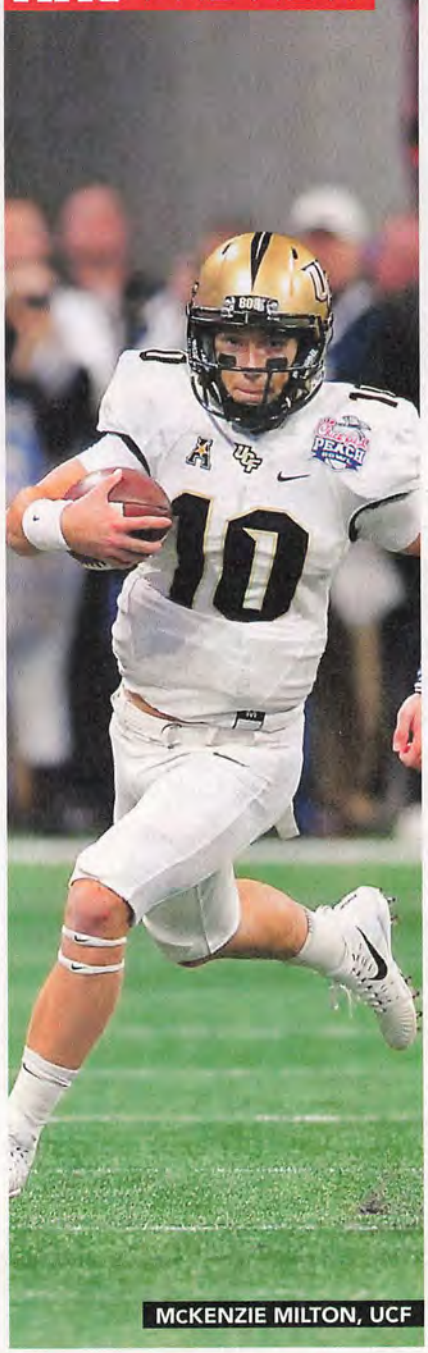
NOV. 1
TEMPLE AT UCF
Temple improved throughout Geoff Collins' first season. We'll find out if the Owls are contenders when they visit Orlando in early November.

NOV. 17
USF AT TEMPLE
The home team has won all four in this series that dates back to 2012. The Bulls pounded Temple 43–7 in Tampa last season.

NOV. 23
UCF AT USF
These two rivals played one of the compelling games of the 2017 season — a 49–42 UCF win before a packed house in Orlando.

NOV. 23
HOUSTON AT MEMPHIS
These two AAC West rivals know how to entertain. They have split the last four with a cumulative score of 148–145 in favor of Memphis.

NOV. 24
NAVY VS. ARMY
Navy has lost two straight in this great rivalry for the first time since the mid-1990s. Ken Niumatalolo will have his team ready to play.


McKENZIE MILTON, UCF

AAC Returning Leaders

Passing	ATT	COMP	PCT	YDS	TD	INT	AVG/G
McKenzie Milton, UCF	395	265	67.1	4,037	37	9	310.5
Ben Hicks, SMU	472	276	58.5	3,569	33	12	274.5
Hayden Moore, Cincinnati	424	239	56.4	2,562	20	9	213.5

Rushing	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Zach Abey, Navy	293	1,413	4.8	19	75	117.8
Malcolm Perry, Navy	138	1,182	8.6	11	92	98.5
Darrell Henderson, Memphis	130	1,154	8.9	9	82	96.2

Receiving	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Trevon Brown, ECU	60	1,069	17.8	7	95	89.1
Justin Hobbs, Tulsa	55	830	15.1	3	69	69.2
James Proche, SMU	40	816	20.4	6	86	62.8

Tackles: McKinley Whitfield, Tulsa (113); Cooper Edmiston, Tulsa (106)
Sacks: Quincy Roche, Temple (7); Ed Oliver, Houston (5.5)
Interceptions: T.J. Carter, Memphis (5)

2017 AAC Standings

EAST	AAC	OVERALL
UCF	8-0	13-0
South Florida	6-2	10-2
Temple	4-4	7-6
East Carolina	2-6	3-9
Cincinnati	2-6	4-8
Connecticut	2-6	3-9

WEST	AAC	OVERALL
Memphis	7-1	10-3
Houston	5-3	7-5
Navy	4-4	7-6
SMU	4-4	7-6
Tulane	3-5	5-7
Tulsa	1-7	2-10

2017 Bowl Results

Frisco Bowl: Louisiana Tech 51, SMU 10

Gasparilla Bowl: Temple 28, FIU 3

Birmingham Bowl: South Florida 38, Texas Tech 34

Hawaii Bowl: Fresno State 33, Houston 27

Military Bowl: Navy 49, Virginia 7

Liberty Bowl: Iowa State 21, Memphis 20

Peach Bowl: UCF 34, Auburn 27

2017 AAC TEAM STATS & RANKINGS

OFFENSE

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
CINCINNATI	20.9 (12)	135.3 (11)	216.4 (9)	351.8 (12)
CONNECTICUT	23.6 (11)	146.0 (9)	269.2 (5)	415.2 (9)
EAST CAROLINA	24.9 (10)	107.7 (12)	317.9 (3)	425.6 (7)
HOUSTON	28.3 (7)	166.8 (8)	261.3 (6)	428.2 (6)
MEMPHIS	45.5 (2)	197.1 (6)	335.0 (1)	532.1 (1)
NAVY	30.5 (5)	351.4 (1)	77.3 (12)	428.7 (5)
SMU	37.8 (4)	184.4 (7)	294.1 (4)	478.5 (4)
TEMPLE	25.1 (9)	136.4 (10)	251.8 (7)	388.2 (11)
TULANE	27.5 (8)	231.5 (4)	160.0 (11)	391.5 (10)
TULSA	29.3 (6)	247.3 (3)	173.1 (10)	420.3 (8)
UCF	48.2 (1)	198.7 (5)	331.8 (2)	530.5 (2)
USF	38.3 (3)	264.1 (2)	248.9 (8)	513.0 (3)

DEFENSE

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
CINCINNATI	31.8 (7)	192.4 (8)	236.1 (5)	428.5 (6)
CONNECTICUT	37.9 (11)	185.1 (7)	333.9 (12)	476.7 (10)
EAST CAROLINA	45.0 (12)	245.5 (11)	296.2 (11)	541.7 (12)
HOUSTON	23.8 (2)	147.9 (2)	274.3 (9)	422.2 (4)
MEMPHIS	32.5 (8)	184.2 (6)	282.1 (10)	466.2 (8)
NAVY	26.3 (5)	154.5 (3)	215.8 (2)	370.3 (2)
SMU	36.7 (9)	207.7 (9)	269.0 (8)	476.7 (9)
TEMPLE	25.8 (4)	174.6 (5)	206.8 (1)	381.5 (3)
TULANE	29.2 (6)	210.4 (10)	225.7 (3)	436.1 (7)
TULSA	37.5 (10)	265.0 (12)	263.9 (6)	528.9 (11)
UCF	25.3 (3)	159.9 (4)	268.1 (7)	428.0 (5)
USF	23.5 (1)	126.9 (1)	232.8 (4)	359.8 (1)

ALL-AAC TEAM

First-Team Offense

QB	**McKenzie Milton**	5-11	185	Jr.	UCF
RB	**Shamari Brooks**	5-9	185	So.	Tulsa
RB	**Darrell Henderson**	5-9	200	Jr.	Memphis
AP	**Adrian Killins**	5-8	158	Jr.	UCF
WR	**Trevon Brown**	6-2	211	Sr.	East Carolina
WR	**Dredrick Snelson**	6-0	206	Jr.	UCF
TE	**Joey Magnifico**	6-4	235	Jr.	Memphis
C	**Jordan Johnson**	6-2	320	Jr.	UCF
OL	**Tyler Bowling**	6-6	325	Sr.	Tulsa
OL	**Wyatt Miller**	6-4	306	Sr.	UCF
OL	**Marcus Norman**	6-6	301	Jr.	USF
OL	**Trevon Tate**	6-4	295	Sr.	Memphis


TREVON BROWN, ECU


ED OLIVER, HOUSTON

First-Team Defense

DL	**Marquise Copeland**	6-2	285	Sr.	Cincinnati
DL	**Trysten Hill**	6-2	330	Jr.	UCF
DL	**Ed Oliver**	6-3	290	Jr.	Houston
DL	**Greg Reaves**	6-2	248	Jr.	USF
LB	**Curtis Akins**	6-2	235	Sr.	Memphis
LB	**Shaun Bradley**	6-1	225	Jr.	Temple
LB	**Pat Jasinski**	6-1	233	Sr.	UCF
CB	**T.J. Carter**	5-11	180	So.	Memphis
CB	**Jordan Wyatt**	6-0	195	Sr.	SMU
S	**Kyle Gibson**	5-11	182	Sr.	UCF
S	**Delvon Randall**	6-1	215	Sr.	Temple

First-Team Specialists

K	**Matthew Wright**	6-0	179	Sr.	UCF
P	**James Smith**	6-5	225	So.	Cincinnati
KR	**Tony Pollard**	6-0	208	Jr.	Memphis
PR	**Isaiah Wright**	6-2	220	Jr.	Temple

SECOND-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Malcolm Perry**	5-9	185	Jr.	Navy
RB	**Ryquell Armstead**	5-11	215	Sr.	Temple
RB	**Xavier Jones**	5-10	203	Jr.	SMU
AP	**Patrick Taylor**	6-3	223	Jr.	Memphis
WR	**Justin Hobbs**	6-4	218	Sr.	Tulsa
WR	**James Proche**	5-11	185	Jr.	SMU
TE	**Mitchell Wilcox**	6-5	245	Jr.	USF
C	**Chandler Miller**	6-3	293	Sr.	Tulsa
OL	**Josh Jones**	6-5	303	Jr.	Houston
OL	**Drew Kyser**	6-5	300	Sr.	Memphis
OL	**Will Noble**	6-4	297	Sr.	Houston
OL	**Andrew Wood**	6-4	290	Sr.	Navy

SECOND-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Cortez Broughton**	6-3	288	Sr.	Cincinnati
DL	**O'Bryan Goodson**	6-1	300	So.	Memphis
DL	**Jarvis Polu**	6-3	292	Sr.	Navy
DL	**Quincy Roche**	6-4	235	So.	Temple
LB	**Khalid McGee**	5-10	199	Sr.	USF
LB	**Kyran Mitchell**	6-0	225	Sr.	SMU
LB	**Perry Young**	6-0	215	Jr.	Cincinnati
CB	**Ronnie Hoggins**	5-8	177	Sr.	USF
CB	**Donnie Lewis**	6-0	195	Sr.	Tulane
S	**McKinley Whitfield**	6-3	216	Sr.	Tulsa
S	**Sean Williams**	6-1	190	Sr.	Navy

SECOND-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Caden Novikoff**	5-10	190	Sr.	Houston
P	**Dane Roy**	6-7	240	Jr.	Houston
KR	**Michael Warren**	5-11	218	So.	Cincinnati
PR	**John Williams**	5-9	172	Jr.	Memphis


Ryquell Armstead
Temple


Cortez Broughton
Cincinnati


Nevelle Clark
UCF


Quayvon Skanes
UConn

THIRD-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Jonathan Banks**	6-2	225	Sr.	Tulane
RB	**Darius Bradwell**	6-1	235	Jr.	Tulane
RB	**Gerrid Doaks**	6-1	225	So.	Cincinnati
AP	**Otis Anderson**	5-11	164	So.	UCF
WR	**DaMonte Coxie**	6-3	200	So.	Memphis
WR	**Isaiah Wright**	6-2	220	Jr.	Temple
TE	**Sean Dykes**	6-2	230	Jr.	Memphis
C	**Matt Hennessy**	6-4	295	So.	Temple
OL	**Corey Dublin**	6-4	300	So.	Tulane
OL	**Jake Hawk**	6-6	295	Sr.	Navy
OL	**Chad Pursley**	6-4	277	Sr.	SMU
OL	**John Spellacy**	6-1	285	So.	East Carolina

THIRD-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Kevin Bronson**	6-4	282	Sr.	USF
DL	**Jerard Carter**	6-2	285	Sr.	Houston
DL	**Robert Kennedy**	6-1	275	Sr.	Tulane
DL	**Jackson Pittman**	6-3	304	Jr.	Navy
LB	**Cooper Edmiston**	6-3	239	Jr.	Tulsa
LB	**Emeke Egbule**	6-3	245	Sr.	Houston
LB	**Hudson Sullivan**	6-2	240	Sr.	Navy
CB	**Nevelle Clark**	6-1	185	Jr.	UCF
CB	**Tyler Coyle**	6-1	205	So.	UConn
S	**Garrett Davis**	6-0	205	Sr.	Houston
S	**Austin Hall**	6-2	215	Jr.	Memphis

THIRD-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Aaron Boumerhi**	6-0	200	Jr.	Temple
P	**Thomas Bennett**	6-3	180	Jr.	Tulsa
KR	**Adrian Killins**	5-8	158	Jr.	UCF
PR	**Quayvon Skanes**	5-11	179	So.	UConn

Armstead, Broughton, Skanes: AP; Milton: UCF Athletics; Brown ECU Athletics; Oliver: @UHfootball.com; Clark UCF Athletics

Cincinnati **Bearcats**

National Forecast: **96** • AAC East Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **4-8, 3-5 AAC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at UCLA
Sept.	8	Miami (Ohio) #
Sept.	15	Alabama A&M
Sept.	22	Ohio
Sept.	29	at Connecticut
Oct.	6	Tulane
Oct.	20	at Temple
Oct.	27	at SMU
Nov.	3	Navy
Nov.	10	South Florida
Nov.	17	at UCF
Nov.	23	East Carolina

#Paul Brown Stadium

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 4-8, 2-6 AAC

Aug.	31	Austin Peay	W	26-14
Sept.	9	at Michigan	L	14-36
Sept.	16	at Miami (Ohio)	W	21-17
Sept.	23	at Navy	L	32-42
Sept.	30	Marshall	L	21-38
Oct.	7	UCF	L	23-51
Oct.	14	at South Florida	L	3-33
Oct.	21	SMU	(ot) L	28-31
Nov.	4	at Tulane	W	17-16
Nov.	10	Temple	L	24-35
Nov.	18	at East Carolina	L	20-48
Nov.	25	Connecticut	W	22-21

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Leonard Taylor, TE, Springfield, OH
2. Tavion Thomas, RB, Dayton, OH
3. Josh Whyle, TE, Cincinnati, OH
4. Malik Vann, DE, Fairfield, OH
5. Meechi Harris, WR, Xenia, OH
6. Arquon Bush, CB, Euclid, OH
7. Ben Bryant, QB, La Grange, IL
8. Lorenz Metz, DL, Germany
9. Charles McClelland, RB, Homerville, GA
10. Myjai Sanders, DE, Kingsland, GA

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	AAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	20.9 ppg	12	111
Rushing	135.3 ypg	11	100
Passing	216.4 ypg	9	74
Total	351.8 ypg	12	101
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	31.8 ppg	7	93
Rushing	192.4 ypg	8	95
Passing	236.1 ypg	5	80
Total	428.5 ypg	6	95
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
-5	-0.42	10	97

STAT CORNER

43

According to the 247Sports Composite, Cincinnati has brought aboard 43 three- or four-star recruits in the last two signing periods.

OFFENSE Coach Luke Fickell saw his inaugural Bearcats team rank just 111th nationally in scoring offense last year. Offensive coordinator Mike Denbrock will retain his post but will now coach tight ends after handling quarterbacks last season. Former running backs coach Gino Guidugli, who still holds several UC passing records, is now coaching quarterbacks.

Senior quarterback Hayden Moore is the incumbent. The streaky Moore last season completed 239-of-424 passes (56.4 percent) for 2,562 yards, with 20 touchdown passes and nine interceptions.

Running back Gerrid Doaks led UC in rushing with 513 yards on a healthy 5.9-yard average. Doaks missed the final few games with a shoulder injury but appears ready for 2018. Sophomore Michael Warren II showed some flash last year with 324 yards.

Top wide receiver Kahlil Lewis returns for his senior year. Lewis led UC last season with 61 catches for 676 yards and seven touchdowns. No other returning receiver caught more than 29 passes.

The offensive line is a real concern, with only two returning starters and a shortage of upperclassmen.

DEFENSE The Bearcats allowed at least 31 points eight times last year, losing each time. A lack of offense didn't help, but the UC defense often had trouble getting off the field. The Bearcats ranked 100th nationally in third-down conversion defense, allowing opponents to convert on 43.3 percent of their attempts.

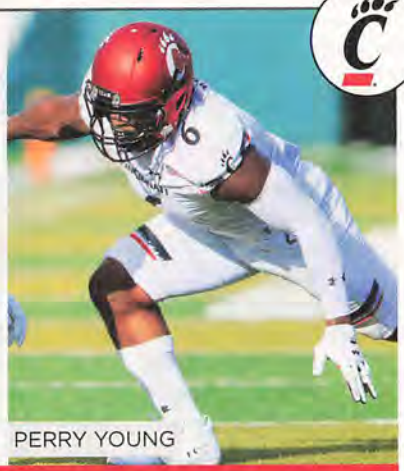
UC does have two stalwart defensive tackles in seniors Marquise Copeland and Cortez Broughton. Copeland was honorable mention All-AAC last season, while Broughton earned second-team all-league honors in 2016.

The lack of a pass rush has been a problem for many years, as UC has been unable to find consistent edge rushers. UC ranked only 123rd nationally last year in sacks, with 1.0 per game. Copeland, an interior lineman, led the team with 3.5 sacks.

Junior Will linebacker Perry Young is UC's top returning tackler with 101 last year. UC will have some new faces in the secondary, which has lacked playmakers. The Bearcats intercepted only five passes last year, tied for 119th nationally. Senior safeties Chris Murphy and Tyrell Gilbert, both part-time starters last year, are among the top returnees.

SPECIALISTS Punter James Smith, a native of Australia, was Cincinnati's lone first-team All-AAC selection in 2017 as a true freshman. The Bearcats ranked 15th nationally with a net average of 41.0 yards per punt. Placekicking has been erratic and largely unproductive the past two years, with the job changing hands several times. Freshman Cole Smith is the frontrunner for that position. The coverage and return teams have been longtime issues for UC, which has had no special teams return touchdowns since 2011.

FINAL ANALYSIS With a shortage of stars, and a coaching staff in Year 2 of a rebuilding project, a .500 record might be the best the Bearcats can hope for this season. UC has gone 8–16 during the past two years, but things appear brighter for the long term. Multiple recruiting services rated the 2018 UC class No. 1 in the AAC and tops among Group of 5 schools. "It shows us that we're recruiting in the right way," Fickell says. "You continue to take those swings and you see them pay off. They'll pay off for the next three, four or five years."



PERRY YOUNG

"You have to talk about their recruiting class first and foremost, because their current staff didn't get what they needed to start fresh in terms of talent."

— An opposing AAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	**1**	**Kahlil Lewis (Sr.)**	26	Jerron Rollins (Jr.)
WR	17	Rashad Medaris (Jr.)	7	Javan Hawes (So.)
WR	**85**	**Thomas Geddis (Jr.)**	35	Trent Cloud (Fr.)
LT	73	Blake Yager (Jr.)	77	Vincent McConnell (Fr.)
LG	**72**	**Garrett Campbell (Sr.)**	54	Keith Minor (Sr.)
C	70	Jakari Robinson (Fr.)	60	Zach Byczynski (So.)
RG	78	Morgan James (Jr.)	65	Cody Lamb (Fr.)
RT	**61**	**Kyle Trout (Sr.)**	75	Chris Ferguson (Sr.)
TE	83	Josiah Deguara (Jr.)	82	Wilson Huber (Fr.)
QB	**8**	**Hayden Moore (Sr.)**	9	Desmond Ridder (Fr.)
RB	23	Gerrid Doaks (So.)	3	Michael Warren II (So.)

DEFENSE (6)

DE	**48**	**Kevin Mouhon (Sr.)**	19	Ethan Tucky (So.)
DT	**96**	**Cortez Broughton (Sr.)**	99	Marcus Brown (So.)
DT	**44**	**Marquise Copeland (Sr.)**	92	Curtis Brooks (So.)
DE	51	Kimoni Fitz (Sr.)	43	Michael Pitts (So.)
WLB	**6**	**Perry Young (Jr.)**	40	Ty Sponseller (So.)
MLB	41	Joel Dublanko (So.)	95	Bryan Wright (Jr.)
SLB	4	Malik Clements (Sr.)	8	Jarell White (So.)
CB	25	Coby Bryant (So.)	24	Noah Hamlin (Fr.)
CB	12	TJ Johnson (So.)	10	Christian Angulo (Jr.)
S	**30**	**Chris Murphy (Sr.)**	32	James Wiggins (So.)
S	**2**	**Tyrell Gilbert (Sr.)**	16	Darrick Forrest (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	19	Cole Smith (Fr.)	**KR**	3	Michael Warren (So.)
P	37	James Smith (So.)	**PR**	7	Javan Hawes (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Hayden Moore, 424-239-2,562-9, 20 TDs
Rushing: Gerrid Doaks, 87 att., 513 yds., 2 TDs
Receiving: Kahlil Lewis, 61 rec., 676 yds., 7 TDs
Tackles: Perry Young, 101
Sacks: Marquise Copeland, 3.5
Interceptions: Malik Clements, 1; Bryan Wright, 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Luke Fickell
Record at School: 4-8 (1 year)
Career Record: 10-15 (2 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Mike Denbrock
Defensive Coordinator: Marcus Freeman
Cincinnati, OH • Nippert Stadium (40,000)

AP

Connecticut **Huskies**

National Forecast: **117** • AAC East Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **3-9, 1-7 AAC**


KEVIN MENSAH

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	UCF
Sept.	8	at Boise State
Sept.	15	Rhode Island
Sept.	22	at Syracuse
Sept.	29	Cincinnati
Oct.	6	at Memphis
Oct.	20	at South Florida
Oct.	27	Massachusetts
Nov.	3	at Tulsa
Nov.	10	SMU
Nov.	17	at East Carolina
Nov.	24	Temple

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 3-9, 2-6 AAC

Aug.	31	Holy Cross	W	27-20
Sept.	16	at Virginia	L	18-38
Sept.	24	East Carolina	L	38-41
Sept.	30	at SMU	L	28-49
Oct.	6	Memphis	L	31-70
Oct.	14	at Temple	W	28-24
Oct.	21	Tulsa	W	20-14
Oct.	28	Missouri	L	12-52
Nov.	4	South Florida	L	20-37
Nov.	11	at UCF	L	24-49
Nov.	18	vs. Boston College #	L	16-39
Nov.	25	at Cincinnati	L	21-22

#Boston

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Dante Black, RB, Lilburn, GA
2. Steven Krajewski, QB, Moultrie, GA
3. Shamel Lazarus, CB, Queens, NY
4. Oneil Robinson II, DB, Hartford, CT
5. Travis Jones, DL, New Haven, CT
6. Jonathan Pace, DE, Boston, MA
7. Jordan Morrison, DB, Hamilton, NJ
8. Hunter Webb, OLB, Montoursville, PA
9. Pete Rooney Jr., OT, Atlanta, GA
10. Dylan Niedrowski, OT, Reading, PA

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	AAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	23.6 ppg	11	103
Rushing	146.0 ypg	9	89
Passing	269.2 ypg	5	34
Total	415.2 ypg	9	50
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	37.9 ppg	11	122
Rushing	185.1 ypg	7	86
Passing	333.9 ypg	12	130
Total	519.0 ypg	10	127
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
-8	-0.67	11	114

STAT CORNER

-1.3

UConn averaged just 3.8 points per trip inside the opponent's 40 and allowed 5.1. That minus-1.3 margin ranked 125th in FBS.

OFFENSE The UConn offense, the lowest-scoring unit in the nation in 2016, improved to reach a functional level in 2017, Randy Edsall's first season back as coach. Coordinator Rhett Lashlee then left for SMU and was replaced by John Dunn, so the Huskies are on to a new page in an ever-changing offensive story. Dunn, most recently an assistant with the Chicago Bears, will become the fifth coach in five years to spend at least part of a season as coordinator.

The Huskies averaged 23.6 points (103rd in FBS) and 415.2 yards (50th) last season but return few proven weapons outside of senior receiver Hergy Mayala (43 receptions, 615 yards). Senior quarterback David Pindell, a junior college transfer, won the job out of camp last season but was replaced in the opener by Bryant Shirreffs, who remained the starter until Pindell returned for the final three games. Pindell is the clear frontrunner to start in 2018, with the offense ready to gear its no-huddle approach to his running ability.

Tyler Davis is an intriguing tight end, and the Huskies are probably deeper at receiver than at any other position with Mayala supported by Keyion Dixon, Tyraiq Beals and Quayvon Skanes.

There are questions on a young, remodeled offensive line and at running back, where Kevin Mensah returns as the leading rusher (561 yards). The line has been a significant problem in recent years and remains a concern. It's being rebuilt around senior center Ryan Crozier.

DEFENSE The Huskies were almost historically bad on defense last season, allowing an average of 333.9 passing yards per game, last in FBS. UConn was also among the nation's worst units in scoring defense (37.9 ppg) and total defense (519.0 ypg).

The Huskies lost their starting front three (Foley Fatukasi, Luke Carrezola and Cole Ormsby) and top linebacker in Junior Joseph. UConn's secondary became a carousel of inexperienced players, and competition at cornerback and safety for playing time in Billy Crocker's 3-3-5 system was wide open in the spring and will continue to be.

Darrian Beavers is an emerging linebacker, but there are significant holes to fill and inexperienced players who will be relied on up and down the depth chart — never a solid recipe for success in the short term.

SPECIALISTS Placekicker Michael Tarbutt has a strong but inconsistent leg. He was 12-of-18 on field goals last season, connecting from as far as 53 yards but missing several short attempts (including from 33 yards as time expired in a 41–38 loss to East Carolina, and an extra point — pushed back by a Mayala taunting penalty — as time expired on a season-ending loss to Cincinnati). Brett Graham averaged just 38.8 yards per punt.

FINAL ANALYSIS The thought is that UConn will be better, with so many first-year players debuting last season and now returning, but that doesn't mean an improved record should be expected. The Huskies aren't quite big enough, strong enough or fast enough on either side of the line, and players at skill positions remain very raw. Edsall has a clear approach, and the program — after six tumultuous years following his first stint — appears to be headed in the right direction. But it will likely take the upcoming season plus another for the project to truly gain traction. Barring a big surprise, UConn appears headed for an eighth straight losing season.

"They've got a coach who obviously knows what to do to win there; they just have to get their development cycle back up and running. That takes years."

— An opposing AAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	1	**Hergy Mayala (Sr.)**	19	Quayvon Skanes (So.)
WR	23	Keyion Dixon (So.)	26	Kyle Buss (Sr.)
WR	2	Tyraiq Beals (Sr.)		Heron Maurisseau (Fr.)
LT	74	**Ryan Van Demark (So.)**	71	James Tunstall (Fr.)
LG	70	**Cam DeGeorge (So.)**	56	Nino Leone (So.)
C	63	Ryan Crozier (Sr.)	55	Stanley Hubbard (Fr.)
RG	67	Brian Cespedes (Jr.)	54	Robert Holmes (Fr.)
RT	65	**Matt Peart (Jr.)**	78	Ian Campbell (Jr.)
TE	9	Tyler Davis (Jr.)	8	**Aaron McLean (Sr.)**
QB	5	David Pindell (Sr.)	7	Marvin Washington (Fr.)
RB	34	Kevin Mensah (So.)	11	Nate Hopkins (So.)

DEFENSE (2)

DE	96	James Atkins (Sr.)	88	Connor Freeborn (Jr.)
DL	94	Kevin Murphy (Jr.)	52	Caleb Thomas (Fr.)
DL	58	Philippe Okounam (Jr.)	92	Carlton Steer (Sr.)
LB	22	Eli Thomas (Jr.)	47	Santana Sterling (Sr.)
LB	43	Darrian Beavers (So.)	6	Eddie Hahn (So.)
LB	45	Ryan Gilmartin (So.)	42	T.J. Gardner (Fr.)
CB	41	**Marshé Terry (Jr.)**	18	Bebe Olaniyan (Fr.)
S	14	Tahj Herring-Wilson (So.)	27	Omar Fortt (So.)
S	30	Jordan Swann (So.)	32	Shamel Lazarus (Fr.)
S	44	Ian Swenson (Fr.)		Jeremy Lucien (Fr.)
CB	25	**Tyler Coyle (So.)**	37	Kyle Williams (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	40	Michael Tarbutt (Jr.)	**KR**	26	Kyle Buss (Sr.)
P	81	Brett Graham (So.)	**PR**	19	Quayvon Skanes (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: David Pindell, 159-84-937-6, 4 TDs
Rushing: Kevin Mensah, 126 att., 561 yds., 4 TDs
Receiving: Hergy Mayala, 43 rec., 615 yds., 7 TDs
Tackles: Tyler Coyle, 67
Sacks: Darrian Beavers, 3.0
Interceptions: Tyler Coyle, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Randy Edsall
Record at School: 77-79 (13 years)
Career Record: 99-113 (17+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: John Dunn
Defensive Coordinator: Billy Crocker
Storrs, CT • Rentschler Field (40,642)

Steve Slade – UConn

East Carolina **Pirates**

National Forecast: **122** • AAC East Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **2-10, 1-7 AAC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	North Carolina A&T
Sept.	8	North Carolina
Sept.	15	at Virginia Tech
Sept.	22	at South Florida
Sept.	29	Old Dominion
Oct.	6	at Temple
Oct.	13	Houston
Oct.	20	UCF
Nov.	3	Memphis
Nov.	10	at Tulane
Nov.	17	Connecticut
Nov.	23	at Cincinnati

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 3-9, 2-6 AAC

Sept.	2	James Madison	L	14-34
Sept.	9	at West Virginia	L	20-56
Sept.	16	Virginia Tech	L	17-64
Sept.	24	at Connecticut	W	41-38
Sept.	30	South Florida	L	31-61
Oct.	7	Temple	L	10-34
Oct.	14	at UCF	L	21-63
Oct.	21	BYU	W	33-17
Nov.	4	at Houston	L	27-52
Nov.	11	Tulane	(ot) L	24-31
Nov.	18	Cincinnati	W	48-20
Nov.	25	at Memphis	L	13-70

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Holton Ahlers, QB, Greenville, NC
2. Dorian Hardy, DE, Elizabeth, NJ
3. Donovan Noel, OG, Raleigh, NC
4. Nolan Johnson, CB, High Point, NC
5. Myles Berry, S, Greensboro, NC
6. Xavier Smith, ILB, Stafford, VA
7. Jaren Rainey, QB, High Point, NC
8. Warren Saba, CB, Cleveland, OH*
9. Peyton Winstead, C, Raleigh, NC
10. Johnny Bogle, TE, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	AAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	24.9 ppg	10	94
Rushing	107.7 ypg	12	119
Passing	317.9 ypg	3	12
Total	425.6 ypg	7	42
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	45.0 ppg	12	130
Rushing	245.5 ypg	11	125
Passing	296.2 ypg	11	125
Total	541.7 ypg	12	130
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
-10	-0.83	12	120

STAT CORNER

-2.3

ECU averaged 5.4 yards per play and allowed a nation's worst 7.7. They fell behind by 2.3 net yards with every snap, most in FBS.

OFFENSE The Pirates' ship sank again last year, as coach Scottie Montgomery's offense was unable to bail out a porous defense. Now a new QB, Reid Herring, steps in as the Pirates hope for a return to their formerly high-scoring ways. Herring has all of two games under his belt and replaces Gardner Minshew, who left East Carolina after helping account for 317.9 passing yards per game and is now at Washington State.

Herring completed his one collegiate pass for a touchdown, and he impressed this spring with his command of the offense, his ability to make plays downfield and his judiciousness in hanging onto the pigskin. That wasn't a Pirate strong point in 2017, as ECU ranked 120th nationally in turnover margin. If Herring falters, blue-chip freshman and hometown hero Holton Ahlers looks special. He makes plays with his feet until he can make more with his arm.

A handful of former Pirate pass catchers are collecting NFL paychecks, and it's still Wide Receiver U in Greenville with the return of dangerous Trevon Brown (60 receptions for 1,069 yards and seven scores). He's big and fast and NFL-bound, too. Deondre Farrier and Tahj Deans can also make plays.

Tight end Anthony Watley looks primed for a career year, and Garrett McGhin, D'Ante Smith and John Spellacy also return up front. The backfield has some experience and depth, highlighted by junior Hussein Howe, who led the Pirates with 419 yards and a 4.4 per-carry average. There's certainly room for improvement for the AAC's worst running attack (107.7 ypg).

DEFENSE ECU alum David Blackwell is back to take over one of the nation's worst defenses. The Pirates finished last in FBS in allowing 45.0 points and 541.7 yards per game. Their 11 sacks were the second fewest in the country. Blackwell comes in from FCS Jacksonville State, where his squad led the nation in completion percentage allowed (50.2) and ranked second in rushing yards allowed per carry (3.0).

Blackwell has three players who started at least four games back up front, including future star Kendall Futrell at the stand-up Bandit end. Coaches believe Alex Turner is headed for All-AAC honors. There's experience and depth here and at linebacker, where prototype middle man Bruce Bivens and emerging leader Aaron Ramseur are on an upward arc as well.

Seniors Corey Seargent and Marcus Holton headline a talented young secondary ready to make more plays in what should be a much-improved defense.

SPECIALISTS Junior Jake Verity hit 9-of-11 field goals inside 40 yards, and he seems to have an edge over kickoff specialist Caleb Pratt to handle both the placekicking and punting jobs. Montgomery brought back special teams coach Kirk Doll, who was a key part of Ruffin McNeill's staff when ECU went to three bowls in four years.

FINAL ANALYSIS After back-to-back 3–9 finishes, Montgomery desperately needs to show some progress this season. The downturn in football fortunes has already cost athletic director Jeff Compher his job. Montgomery has five new coaches on staff this year, but Blackwell is the most important of those changes, charged with salvaging a defense that was often defenseless last year. There's some young talent among the sophomores and redshirt freshmen that can up the ante — on both sides of the ball — for the Pirates, who might finally have some wind in their sails again.



TREVON BROWN

"There's more talent there than the record (3-9) shows. Offensively they've got some playmakers, but they haven't found a way to build around them."

— An opposing AAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (3)

WR	88	**Trevon Brown (Sr.)**	15	Terrell Green (Sr.)
WR	1	Deondre Farrier (Jr.)	83	Cam Marshmon (Jr.)
WR	8	Tahj Deans (So.)	19	Mydreon Vines (So.)
LT	67	D'Ante Smith (Jr.)	99	Dalton Montgomery (Jr.)
LG	70	Cortez Herrin (Jr.)	52	Dqmarcus Shaw (Sr.)
C	58	**John Spellacy (So.)**	57	Peyton Winstead (Fr.)
RG	75	Sean Bailey (So.)	63	Jaison Fournet (So.)
RT	55	**Garrett McGhin (Sr.)**	73	Matt Morgan (Fr.)
TE	80	Anthony Watley (Jr.)	49	Ben Norris (So.)
QB	9	Reid Herring (So.)	12	Holton Ahlers (Fr.)
RB	28	Hussein Howe (Jr.)	27	Darius Pinnix (So.)

DEFENSE (3)

DE	59	Chandon Hickerson (So.)	24	Michael Swift (Sr.)
NT	94	Alex Turner (Jr.)	93	**Jalen Price (Jr.)**
DT	89	Raequan Purvis (So.)	50	Shaun James (Sr.)
BAN	44	Kendall Futrell (Jr.)	46	Chance Purvis (So.)
MLB	38	Bruce Bivens (So.)	40	Nate Harvey (Sr.)
WLB	51	Aaron Ramseur (So.)	39	Delvontae Harris (Fr.)
CB	5	Corey Seargent (Sr.)	23	Warren Saba (So.)
CB	26	**Colby Gore (Jr.)**	36	MIchael Witherspoon (Jr.)
NB	1	Tim Irvin (Jr.)	42	**Devon Sutton (Jr.)**
FS	13	Davondre Robinson (So.)	20	Nolan Johnson (Fr.)
SS	6	Marcus Holton Jr. (Sr.)	25	Da'Andre Beverly (Fr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	9	Jake Verity (Jr.)	KR	88 Trevon Brown (Sr.)
P	9	Jake Verity (Jr.)	PR	26 Colby Gore (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Reid Herring, 1-1-20-0, 1 TD
Rushing: Hussein Howe, 96 att., 419 yds., 3 TDs
Receiving: Trevon Brown, 60 rec., 1,069 yds., 7 TDs
Tackles: Devon Sutton, 68
Sacks: Tyree Owens, 1.5
Interceptions: Aaron Ramseur, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Scottie Montgomery
Record at School: 6-18 (2 years)
Career Record: 6-18 (2 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Tony Petersen
Defensive Coordinator: David Blackwell
Greenville, NC • Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium (50,000)

ECU Athletics

Temple **Owls**

National Forecast: **60** • AAC East Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **7-5, 5-3 AAC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Villanova
Sept.	8	Buffalo
Sept.	15	at Maryland
Sept.	20	Tulsa
Sept.	29	at Boston College
Oct.	6	East Carolina
Oct.	13	at Navy
Oct.	20	Cincinnati
Nov.	1	at UCF
Nov.	10	at Houston
Nov.	17	South Florida
Nov.	24	at Connecticut

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 4-4 AAC

Sept.	2	at Notre Dame	L	16-49
Sept.	9	Villanova	W	16-13
Sept.	15	Massachusetts	W	29-21
Sept.	21	at South Florida	L	7-43
Sept.	30	Houston	L	13-20
Oct.	7	at East Carolina	W	34-10
Oct.	14	Connecticut	L	24-28
Oct.	21	at Army (ot)	L	28-31
Nov.	2	Navy	W	34-26
Nov.	10	at Cincinnati	W	35-24
Nov.	18	UCF	L	19-45
Nov.	25	at Tulsa	W	43-22
Dec.	21	vs. FIU #	W	28-3

#Gasparilla Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Sean Ryan, WR, Brooklyn, NY
2. Trad Beatty, QB, Columbia, SC
3. Khris Banks, DT, Wayne, NJ
4. Dante Burke, DE, Virginia Beach, VA
5. Kyle Dobbins, RB, Richland, NJ
6. Travon King, LB, Camden, NJ
7. David Nwaogwugwu, DE, Bronx, NY
8. David Martin-Robinson, WR, Landisville, PA
9. Nickolos Madourie, DE, Sunrise, FL*
10. Evan Boozer, DT, Towson, MD

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	AAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	25.1 ppg	9	93
Rushing	136.4 ypg	10	99
Passing	251.8 ypg	7	45
Total	388.2 ypg	11	80
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	25.8 ppg	4	56
Rushing	174.6 ypg	5	77
Passing	206.8 ypg	1	40
Total	381.5 ypg	3	56
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
-4	-0.31	9	90

STAT CORNER

23.9

Temple got stuffed at or behind the line on 23.9% of its carries, 123rd in FBS and second-worst in the AAC (ahead of only ECU).

OFFENSE Frank Nutile took over at quarterback — replacing Logan Marchi, who has transferred — for the last six games a year ago. The Owls went 4–2 with Nutile as the starter, including their third bowl win in program history.

The top two rushers, David Hood and Ryquell Armstead, are back, as is Jager Gardner, who suffered a season-ending knee injury in Week 4. Armstead was slowed by injuries as well. He's gained 1,714 career yards, with 21 touchdowns.

Isaiah Wright is a big play waiting to happen. The team's leading receiver (46 catches), Wright produced touchdowns in five different ways (including passing for a TD), making him the sixth FBS player to accomplish that in the last decade.

The line is strong through the middle. Sophomore center Matt Hennessy was a Rimington Award finalist, and he's back up to 295 pounds after playing last season at only 260 due to an illness. Guard Jovahn Fair missed seven games with a shoulder injury but should be ready to go this season.

DEFENSE The Owls have to replace two NFL-caliber ends. But tackle Michael Dogbe is a freakish athlete for a guy his size (6'3", 280).

Middle linebacker Shaun Bradley had a team-best 85 tackles, 10 for a loss. Strong-side backer Sam Franklin has also played end and cornerback, sometimes in the same game.

The secondary has to replace three starters, including three-time all-conference selection Sean Chandler. But safety Delvon Randall, another first-team all-conference performer, had four interceptions in each of the past two seasons. Senior transfer Rock Ya-Sin comes to North Broad Street from FCS Presbyterian College. He had 24 starts at Presbyterian, with 95 tackles and five picks.

SPECIALISTS Aaron Boumerhi has made 30-of-40 field goal attempts, with a long of 52, since inheriting the job as a freshman in 2016. The Owls will have a different punter for the first time since 2014 now that Alex Starzyk has exhausted his eligibility. Wright averaged 8.4 yards on 11 punt returns and 24.9 on 13 kickoff returns, including one of 98 yards.

FINAL ANALYSIS Former Florida defensive coordinator Geoff Collins took over from good friend Matt Rhule, who left for Baylor after putting together back-to-back 10-win seasons — at a program that had one double-digit win season in its history. In Collins' debut season as a head coach, he had to replace a four-year starting quarterback. In the first eight games, the Owls lost at Notre Dame, at South Florida, to Houston and in overtime at Army. Their only blemish the rest of the way was a loss to UCF. That's something to build on.

The Owls have 18 conference wins in the last three seasons, second most in the AAC. They made it to the title game in 2016, when they won their first championship in a half-century. This team won't be the favorite — not in a division with the two Florida schools. The Owls also get Navy and Houston on the road in crossover games, and they go to Maryland and Boston College. So it won't be easy.

Still, there seems to be enough in place to perhaps exceed last season's win total if everything breaks right. The Owls just can't afford to lose any games that they probably shouldn't, like they did last year against 3–9 Connecticut in South Philly. This is Collins' team now. Expect Year 2 to be another step in the right direction.



DAVID HOOD

"That staff really got it together late in the year, and they played much better. The 2017 roster wasn't as deep as some of the Matt Rhule teams."

— An opposing AAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	19	Ventell Bryant (Sr.)	81	Randle Jones (Jr.)	
WR	13	**Isaiah Wright (Jr.)**	80	Freddie Johnson (So.)	
LT	74	James McHale (Sr.)	66	Leon Pinto (So.)	
LG	70	Jovahn Fair (Jr.)	61	Vaughn Fulton (Sr.)	
C	58	**Matt Hennessy (So.)**	50	Griffin Sestili (Fr.)	
RT	77	Jaelin Robinson (Sr.)	75	Darian Bryant (So.)	
RG	76	Vincent Picozzi (So.)	78	Aaron Ruff (Sr.)	
TE	85	**Chris Myarick (Sr.)**	84	Kenny Yeboah (So.)	
QB	8	**Frank Nutile (Sr.)**	15	Anthony Russo (So.)	
RB	24	**David Hood (Sr.)**	7	Ryquell Armstead (Sr.)	
FB	45	Rob Ritrovato (Sr.)	39	Jonny Forrest (So.)	

DEFENSE (5)

DE	90	Quincy Roche (So.)	42	DeAndre Kelly (Jr.)	
DT	98	Michael Dogbe (Sr.)	99	Freddie Booth-Lloyd (Sr.)	
DT	95	**Dan Archibong (So.)**	72	Karamo Dioubate (Jr.)	
DE	17	Dana Levine (Jr.)	10	Zach Mesday (Sr.)	
SLB	36	**Sam Franklin (Jr.)**	19	Isaiah Graham-Mobley (So.)	
MLB	23	**Shaun Bradley (Jr.)**	35	William Kwenkeu (Jr.)	
WLB	22	**Chapelle Russell (Jr.)**	40	Todd Jones (Sr.)	
CB	11	Linwood Crump (Jr.)	24	Kimere Brown (So.)	
CB	29	Rock Ya-Sin (Sr.)	14	Christian Braswell (Fr.)	
S	2	**Delvon Randall (Sr.)**	20	Keyone Bruton (So.)	
S	32	Benny Walls (Jr.)	28	Jyquis Thomas (Sr.)	

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	97	Aaron Boumerhi (Jr.)	KR	13	Isaiah Wright (Jr.)
P	15	Connor Bowler (Fr.)	PR	13	Isaiah Wright (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Frank Nutile, 199-122-1,600-7, 12 TDs
Rushing: David Hood, 130 att., 638 yds., 5 TDs
Receiving: Isaiah Wright, 46 rec., 668 yds., 4 TDs
Tackles: Shaun Bradley, 85
Sacks: Quincy Roche, 7.0
Interceptions: Delvon Randall, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Geoff Collins
Record at School: 7-6 (1 year)
Career Record: 7-6 (1 year)
Offensive Coordinator: Dave Patenaude
Defensive Coordinator: Andrew Thacker
Philadelphia, PA • Lincoln Financial Field (69,176)

Zamani Feelings Photography/Courtesy Temple Athletics

UCF Knights

National Forecast: **31** • AAC East Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **10-3, 7-1 AAC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	at Connecticut
Sept.	8	South Carolina State
Sept.	15	at North Carolina
Sept.	21	Florida Atlantic
Sept.	29	Pittsburgh
Oct.	6	SMU
Oct.	13	at Memphis
Oct.	20	at East Carolina
Nov.	1	Temple
Nov.	10	Navy
Nov.	17	Cincinnati
Nov.	23	at South Florida

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 13-0, 8-0 AAC

Aug.	31	FIU		W	61-17
Sept.	23	at Maryland		W	38-10
Sept.	30	Memphis		W	40-13
Oct.	7	at Cincinnati		W	51-23
Oct.	14	East Carolina		W	63-21
Oct.	21	at Navy		W	31-21
Oct.	28	Austin Peay		W	73-33
Nov.	4	at SMU		W	31-24
Nov.	11	Connecticut		W	49-24
Nov.	18	at Temple		W	45-19
Nov.	24	South Florida		W	49-42
Dec.	2	Memphis #	(ot)	W	62-55
Jan.	1	vs. Auburn %		W	34-27

#AAC Championship %Peach Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Ke'von Ahmad, WR, Colleyville, TX
2. Eriq Gilyard, OLB, Jacksonville, FL
3. Randy Charlton, DE, Miami, FL
4. Jermaine McMillian, S, Miami, FL
5. Landon Woodson, DE, Fredericksburg, VA
6. Demetreius Mayes, DE, Miami, FL
7. Derek Gainous, CB, Miami, FL
8. Lamarius Benson, OL, Covington, GA
9. Davonchae Bryant, DE, Pensacola, FL
10. Ike Walker, DL, Gainesville, FL

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	AAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	48.2 ppg	1	1
Rushing	198.7 ypg	5	33
Passing	331.8 ypg	2	10
Total	530.5 ypg	2	5
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	25.3 ppg	3	52
Rushing	159.9 ypg	4	59
Passing	268.1 ypg	7	116
Total	428.0 ypg	5	94
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
+17	+1.31	1	2

STAT CORNER

7.5

UCF went from averaging 4.7 yards per play in 2016 (123rd) to 7.5 in 2017 (second), easily the largest improvement in the country.

OFFENSE UCF will be expected to continue putting up big numbers even though there is a coaching — and slight system — change, as Josh Heupel takes over for Scott Frost. The concepts are similar, although Heupel may attempt to execute his offense at an even faster pace than Frost did.

The key cog that makes everything go is McKenzie Milton, who emerged last season as one of the nation's top quarterbacks while leading the Knights to a 13–0 record. Already known for his athleticism, Milton proved to be a big-time passer, finishing among the NCAA leaders in all key passing categories, including second to Baker Mayfield in passing efficiency.

Milton has plenty of weapons, notably running backs Adrian Killins and Otis Anderson and a deep wide receiver corps. He will have to adapt without last year's No. 1 receiver Tre'Quan Smith and tight end Jordan Akins, both of whom left early for the NFL Draft.

Dredrick Snelson, the second receiver option a season ago, appears ready to step up as the main guy, and UCF returns a pair of promising sophomores in Gabe Davis and Marlon Williams. Tight end will be up for grabs, though it seems Wisconsin transfer Jake Hescock could have a leg up on the competition.

UCF does have some starters to replace on the offensive line, but there are several worthy contenders in the mix to fill those spots. Trevor Elbert, a junior college transfer who began his career at Texas A&M, is likely to find a spot in the lineup.

DEFENSE There are more questions on the defensive side with UCF tasked with replacing several impact players — most notably linebacker and team leader Shaquem Griffin and cornerback Mike Hughes, an early NFL Draft entry. Plus, defensive coordinator Randy Shannon is implementing a 4-3 front, adding to the learning curve — particularly for some former outside linebackers who are now defensive ends.

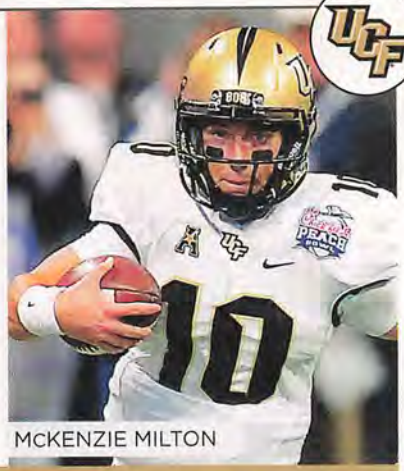
As a position group, the defensive line might have taken the biggest hit with the graduation losses of Jamiyus Pittman and Tony Guerad. The good news is that Trysten Hill returns to anchor the middle, and there are some promising players — Dedrion Bacote-Sweat and Randy Charlton among them — to provide speed coming off the edge at defensive end.

Griffin grabbed most of the attention at linebacker with his seven sacks and 13.5 tackles for a loss, but Pat Jasinski quietly led the team in tackles (104).

Though the secondary loses Hughes, everybody else returns, including senior safeties Tre Neal and Kyle Gibson plus Nevelle Clarke, who many believe will be UCF's next elite corner.

SPECIALISTS The placekicking and punting spots are solid with a pair of seniors. Matthew Wright, who connected on 13-of-18 field goals in 2017, will enter his fourth season as starter. Mac Loudermilk didn't get the opportunity to punt all that often but was always reliable when he did. The biggest question is who will replace Hughes, who had three combined touchdowns last season as the primary kick and punt returner.

FINAL ANALYSIS Heupel inherits an enviable situation but also some of the biggest expectations coming off last year's perfect season and self-proclaimed "National Championship." That said, with all the returning talent, particularly on the offensive side, UCF should be the odds-on favorite to repeat as conference champions with a good shot at returning to a New Year's Six bowl for the third time in six years.



MCKENZIE MILTON

"The battle for them is to keep recruiting aggressively and manage the coaching transition. Memphis did that well; Houston feels like it's still recovering."

— An opposing AAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	**5**	**Dredrick Snelson (Jr.)**	11	Cam Stewart (Sr.)	
WR	**13**	**Gabriel Davis (So.)**	6	Tristan Payton (Sr.)	
WR	17	Marlon Williams (So.)	7	Emmanuel Logan-Greene (So.)	
LT	79	Trevor Elbert (Jr.)	60	Josh McMullen (Jr.)	
LG	53	Tyler Hudanick (Sr.)	61	Parker Boudreaux (So.)	
C	**72**	**Jordan Johnson (Jr.)**	65	Cole Schneider (Fr.)	
RG	73	Samuel Jackson (So.)	70	Luke Palmer (Sr.)	
RT	**78**	**Wyatt Miller (Sr.)**	74	Boman Swanson (So.)	
TE	88	Jake Hescock (So.)	89	Anthony Roberson (So.)	
QB	**10**	**McKenzie Milton (Jr.)**	14	Hayden Kingston (So.)	
RB	**9**	**Adrian Killins (Jr.)**	26	Otis Anderson (So.)	

DEFENSE (6)

DE	35	Dedrion Bacote-Sweat (So.)	95	Jeremiah Zio (Fr.)	
DT	91	Joey Connors (Sr.)	43	Aaron Cochran (Sr.)	
DT	**9**	**Trysten Hill (Jr.)**	54	A.J. Wooten (Sr.)	
DE	98	Brendon Hayes (Jr.)	58	Randy Charlton (Fr.)	
OLB	**10**	**Titus Davis (Sr.)**	28	Shawn Burgess-Becker (Jr.)	
ILB	**56**	**Pat Jasinski (Sr.)**	24	Gabriel Luyanda (Sr.)	
OLB	44	Nate Evans (Jr.)	55	Eric Mitchell (So.)	
CB	14	Nevelle Clarke (Jr.)	21	Rashard Causey (Sr.)	
CB	**20**	**Brandon Moore (So.)**	31	Aaron Robinson (So.)	
FS	**25**	**Kyle Gibson (Sr.)**	3	Antwan Collier (So.)	
SS	**23**	**Tre Neal (Sr.)**	27	Richie Grant (So.)	

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	11	Matthew Wright (Sr.)	**KR**	9	Adrian Killins (Jr.)
P	48	Mac Loudermilk (Sr.)	**PR**	6	Tristan Payton (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: McKenzie Milton, 395-265-4,037-9, 37 TDs
Rushing: Adrian Killins, 122 att., 790 yds., 10 TDs
Receiving: Dredrick Snelson, 46 rec., 695 yds., 8 TDs
Tackles: Pat Jasinski, 104
Sacks: Three players tied with 2
Interceptions: Kyle Gibson, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Josh Heupel
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: First Season
Offensive Coordinator: Josh Heupel
Defensive Coordinator: Randy Shannon
Orlando, FL • Spectrum Stadium (44,206)

Courtesy UCF

USF **Bulls**

National Forecast: **61** • AAC East Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **8-4, 5-3 AAC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Elon
Sept.	8	Georgia Tech
Sept.	15	vs. Illinois #
Sept.	22	East Carolina
Oct.	6	at Massachusetts
Oct.	12	at Tulsa
Oct.	20	Connecticut
Oct.	27	at Houston
Nov.	3	Tulane
Nov.	10	at Cincinnati
Nov.	17	at Temple
Nov.	23	UCF

#Chicago, IL

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 10-2, 6-2 AAC

Aug.	26	at San José State	W	42-22
Sept.	2	Stony Brook	W	31-17
Sept.	15	Illinois	W	47-23
Sept.	21	Temple	W	43-7
Sept.	30	at East Carolina	W	61-31
Oct.	14	Cincinnati	W	33-3
Oct.	21	at Tulane	W	34-28
Oct.	28	Houston	L	24-28
Nov.	4	at Connecticut	W	37-20
Nov.	16	Tulsa	W	27-20
Nov.	24	at UCF	L	42-49
Dec.	23	vs. Texas Tech #	W	38-34

#Birmingham Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Stacy Kirby, DE, Orlando, FL
2. Zion Roland, WR, Saint Petersburg, FL
3. Dwayne Boyles, DE, Miami, FL
4. Sebastian Sainterling, OG, Hollywood, FL
5. Octavious Battle, QB, Atlanta, GA
6. Vincent Davis, CB, Jacksonville, FL
7. Rashawn Yates, DE, Port Saint Lucie, FL
8. Brad Cecil, C, Jacksonville, FL
9. Jajuan Cherry, S, Okeechobee, FL
10. Trey Laing, DE, Tallahassee, FL

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	AAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	38.3 ppg	3	10
Rushing	264.1 ypg	2	8
Passing	248.9 ypg	8	50
Total	513.0 ypg	3	6
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	23.5 ppg	1	41
Rushing	126.9 ypg	1	21
Passing	232.8 ypg	4	76
Total	359.8 ypg	1	37
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
+10	+0.83	3	15

STAT CORNER

31.9

USF opponents gained at least 5.0 yards on just 31.9% of their carries, eighth in FBS and 7.9 percentage points lower than in 2016.

OFFENSE In three seasons as the USF starter, Quinton Flowers accounted for 11,618 total yards and 112 touchdowns while finishing as the FBS's ninth all-time leading rusher among quarterbacks with 3,672 yards. The obvious question: How do you replace him? The obvious answer: You don't.

Charlie Strong, entering his second season at USF, says he's confident there will be an adequate solution with either sophomore Chris Oladokun or junior Brett Kean. "Quinton was very special, a different kind of player," Strong says. "But Chris and Brett have been in the system for two years. They will do the job, and we'll do whatever we can to help them progress."

USF was No. 8 nationally in rushing last season but must replace stalwarts D'Ernest Johnson and Darius Tice (as well as Flowers). The Bulls could rely heavily on Florida transfer Jordan Cronkrite, who rushed for 302 yards in two seasons in Gainesville.

There's plenty of quality depth in the receiving corps. Senior Tyre McCants, a matchup nightmare at 5'11", 240 pounds, is a big-play performer and one of the nation's top blockers at the position. Junior Darnell Salomon began to realize his game-breaking potential last season. The Bulls also plan to exploit the size and agility of junior tight end Mitchell Wilcox.

Three starters return to the offensive line, a major catalyst behind USF's productivity, but the biggest key could be sophomore center Michael Wiggs, who's expected to take over for reliable leader Cameron Ruff.

DEFENSE USF will look to build upon massive defensive improvement that saw the Bulls finish 37th nationally in total defense after an embarrassing 120th (and an average of 482.0 yards allowed) in 2016. The Bulls became much grittier against the run while registering 36 sacks and a plus-10 turnover margin. They had 20 interceptions (tying for second nationally) and 101 tackles for a loss (fifth). Although six starters were lost, there are plenty of reinforcements.

The Bulls are blessed with ample depth and lots of mix-and-match possibilities along the defensive line, where Greg Reaves has emerged as a menacing pass rusher. In the 4-2-5 alignment, weak-side linebacker Khalid McGee, a converted safety, will be a catalyst.

Plenty of experience returns in the secondary. Aggressive senior Ronnie Hoggins inherits the important nickel slot. Coaches are high on sophomore Naytron Culpepper, who worked his way onto the field late last season. He's equally adept at cornerback or safety.

SPECIALISTS The Bulls must replace dependable placekicker Emilio Nadelman and punter Jonathan Hernandez. The competition for USF's placekicking job was hotly contested, and Jake Vivonetto had some good moments. The Bulls will entrust punting duties to sophomore Trent Schneider, a junior college transfer and native of Australia. The Bulls had nation-worst seven kicks blocked last season, a special teams red flag that must be addressed.

FINAL ANALYSIS Strong's first season at USF was a bumpy adjustment at times from Willie Taggart's Gulf Coast Offense. But now there's more of a blank slate to implement Strong's preferred style. The running game will have increased importance, especially while a new quarterback develops.

Overall, though, USF's prosperity will be defined by continued improvement on defense. Don't be surprised if the Bulls find themselves in another do-or-die showdown against UCF for an AAC Division title in the regular-season finale.



TYRE McCANTS

"They're losing a lot on both sides, but Charlie (Strong) is really at home there. They didn't get the attention they deserved because UCF went undefeated."

— An opposing AAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	86	Stanley Clerveaux (Jr.)	84	Randall St. Felix (Fr.)
WR	3	**Darnell Salomon (Jr.)**	81	Ryeshene Bronson (Sr.)
WR	8	**Tyre McCants (Sr.)**	14	Deangelo Antoine (Jr.)
LT	55	**Eric Mayes (Sr.)**	71	Jeremiah Stafford (Fr.)
LG	64	Demetris Harris (Fr.)	65	Marlon Gonzalez (Jr.)
C	52	Michael Wiggs (So.)	75	Jean Marcellus (Fr.)
RG	78	**Billy Atterbury (Jr.)**	67	Hal Roberson (So.)
RT	77	**Marcus Norman (Jr.)**	71	Jeremiah Stafford (Fr.)
TE	89	**Mitchell Wilcox (Jr.)**	87	Frederick Lloyd (Fr.)
QB	10	Chris Oladokun (So.)	7	Brett Kean (Jr.)
RB	32	Jordan Cronkrite (Jr.)	31	Elijah Mack (So.)

DEFENSE (5)

DE	41	**Greg Reaves (Jr.)**	55	Josh Black (Sr.)
DT	99	Kevin Bronson (Sr.)	96	Kelvin Pinkney (So.)
DT	90	Kevin Kegler (So.)	51	Mi'Cario Stanley (So.)
DE	94	Kirk Livingstone (Jr.)	56	Juwuan Brown (Sr.)
MLB	54	**Nico Sawtelle (Jr.)**	34	Keirston Johnson (So.)
WLB	21	Khalid McGee (Sr.)	12	Andre Polk, Jr. (So.)
CB	23	**Mazzi Wilkins (Sr.)**	32	Donelle Thomas (So.)
CB	14	Mike Hampton (So.)	1	Chris Barr (Sr.)
NB	19	**Ronnie Hoggins (Sr.)**	26	Craig Watts (So.)
SS	27	Naytron Culpepper (So.)	37	Nate Ferguson (Sr.)
FS	18	**Jaymon Thomas (Sr.)**	22	Mekhi LaPointe (Fr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	42	Jake Vivonetto (Sr.)	KR	8	Tyre McCants (Sr.)
P	39	Trent Schneider (So.)	PR	14	Deangelo Antoine (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Brett Kean, 11-7-64-0, 0 TDs
Rushing: Trevon Sands, 26 att., 111 yds., 0 TDs
Receiving: Tyre McCants, 36 rec., 686 yds., 7 TDs
Tackles: Nico Sawtelle, 54
Sacks: Greg Reaves, 4.0
Interceptions: Mazzi Wilkins, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Charlie Strong
Record at School: 10-2 (1 year)
Career Record: 63-39 (8+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Sterlin Gilbert
Defensive Coordinator: Brian Jean-Mary
Tampa, FL • Raymond James Stadium (65,890)

USF Athletics

Houston Cougars

National Forecast: **52** • AAC West Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **7-5, 5-3 AAC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at Rice
Sept.	8	Arizona
Sept.	15	at Texas Tech
Sept.	22	Texas Southern
Oct.	4	Tulsa
Oct.	13	at East Carolina
Oct.	20	at Navy
Oct.	27	South Florida
Nov.	3	at SMU
Nov.	10	Temple
Nov.	15	Tulane
Nov.	23	at Memphis

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-5, 5-3 AAC

Sept.	9	at Arizona	W	19-16
Sept.	16	Rice	W	38-3
Sept.	23	Texas Tech	L	24-27
Sept.	30	at Temple	W	20-13
Oct.	7	SMU	W	35-22
Oct.	14	at Tulsa	L	17-45
Oct.	19	Memphis	L	38-42
Oct.	28	at South Florida	W	28-24
Nov.	4	East Carolina	W	52-27
Nov.	18	at Tulane	L	17-20
Nov.	24	Navy	W	24-14
Dec.	24	vs. Fresno State #	L	27-33

#Hawaii Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Julon Williams, QB, Judson, TX
2. Kelan Walker, RB, DeSoto, TX
3. Willie Smith, DE, Spring, TX
4. Clayton Tune, QB, Carrollton, TX
5. Ja'Kori Morgan, WR, Houston, TX
6. Dekalen Goodson, OLB, Tyler, TX
7. Tahj Brown, DE, Donaldsonville, LA
8. Donavan Mutin, ILB, Spring, TX
9. Garrison Vaughn, S, Belton, TX
10. Christian Trahan, TE, Sulphur, LA

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	AAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	28.3 ppg	7	65
Rushing	166.8 ypg	8	63
Passing	261.3 ypg	6	38
Total	428.2 ypg	6	40
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	23.8 ppg	2	42
Rushing	147.9 ypg	2	45
Passing	274.3 ypg	9	120
Total	422.2 ypg	4	89
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
-2	-0.17	7	83

STAT CORNER

6.5

After D'Eriq King took over at quarterback, Houston's offense improved from 5.7 yards per play to 6.5, and its yards per pass from 7.1 to 8.7.

OFFENSE Houston made headlines with the controversial hires of ex-Baylor assistants Kendal Briles (offensive coordinator) and Randy Clements (offensive line coach). Briles will attempt to bring some explosiveness to a Cougars offense coming off its lowest point production (28.3 ppg) since 2005.

Quarterback D'Eriq King gives Briles an important piece to build around. King, who played mostly wide receiver his first two seasons, threw for 1,260 yards with seven touchdowns and only two interceptions. He led a fourth-quarter comeback at USF and went 2–2 in four starts to end the season. Quinten Dormady, a grad transfer from Tennessee, should push King in preseason camp. His arrival could allow the Cougars to temporarily move Bryson Smith to wide receiver.

Coach Major Applewhite promises a more exciting brand of offense with an up-tempo, vertical passing attack. To do so, the Cougars will need to find reliable pass catchers following the graduation of Steven Dunbar and Linell Bonner, who combined for 156 receptions and 1,959 yards last season. Courtney Lark and Keith Corbin are the top returners and will play bigger roles.

The backfield took a hit with the unexpected departure of leading rusher Duke Catalon. Mulbah Car, a bruising 210-pound junior, worked with the first team during the spring. Patrick Carr will compete for carries with Kevrin Justice, Davion Mitchell and Kelan Walker.

Center Will Noble anchors an offensive line that has some holes to fill.

DEFENSE All-America defensive tackle Ed Oliver ended any suspense, announcing in March that he would forgo his senior season and enter the 2019 NFL Draft, where he'll likely be a top-five selection. But he still has one season to go. One of the nation's premier defensive players, Oliver has 39 tackles for a loss in two seasons and as a sophomore became the youngest winner of the Outland Trophy. The defensive front could be dominant with Oliver, a healthy Jerard Carter and the addition of TCU transfer Isaiah Chambers.

At linebacker, Houston must replace the top two tacklers, D'Juan Hines and Matthew Adams. The preference is to keep Emeke Egbule (6.5 tackles for a loss) at one of the outside spots. Leroy Godfrey (8.5 TFLs) is a strong contender at one inside linebacker spot.

Cornerback Jeremy Winchester, who made 16 starts the past two seasons, left the program in March, but the cupboard is hardly empty with returners Alexander Myres and Isaiah Johnson, who made a successful transition from wide receiver. Safety Garrett Davis had four interceptions and provides steady leadership.

SPECIALISTS Caden Novikoff made 80 percent of his field goal attempts (12-of-15), including 10-of-11 to end the season. Australian import Dane Roy averaged 41.8 yards on punts and had 25 downed inside the 20-yard line.

FINAL ANALYSIS Whether a joke or not, school president Renu Khator turned heads when, shortly after Applewhite's hiring, she defined success as 10-win seasons and said, "We'll fire coaches [for going 8-4]." Two seasons since a New Year's Six appearance, Houston took a step back at 7–5 in Applewhite's first season. PR hit or not, the hiring of Briles shows that the pressure is on to return to the top tier in the AAC West. Back-to-back non-conference games against Arizona and Texas Tech in September should tell us where the Cougars stand. Otherwise, the schedule is favorable with just three trips outside the state of Texas.



ED OLIVER

"They have some of the best players in the league, but they don't have the same clear identity from when Tom Herman was there."

— An opposing AAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (3)

WR	18	Keith Corbin (Jr.)	17	Terry Mark (Jr.)
WR	9	Courtney Lark (Jr.)	81	Tre'von Bradley (Fr.)
WR	5	Marquez Stevenson (So.)	6	Jeremy Singleton (Fr.)
LT	**74**	**Josh Jones (Jr.)**	65	Bo Alexander (Jr.)
LG	72	Mason Denley (Sr.)	77	Keenan Murphy (So.)
C	**69**	**Will Noble (Sr.)**	76	Kameron Eloph (Jr.)
RG	**52**	**Braylon Jones (Jr.)**	61	Ryan Deshotel (Jr.)
RT	62	Jarrid Williams (Jr.)	64	Dennis Bardwell (So.)
TE	82	Romello Brooker (Sr.)	87	Sid Turnbull (Jr.)
QB	4	D'Eriq King (Jr.)		Quenten Dormady (Sr.)
RB	34	Mulbah Car (Jr.)	22	Patrick Carr (Jr.)

DEFENSE (5)

DE	52	Jerard Carter (Sr.)	98	Payton Turner (So.)
DT	**10**	**Ed Oliver (Jr.)**	50	Aymiel Fleming (Jr.)
DE	94	Isaiah Chambers (So.)	90	Zach Vaughan (Sr.)
OLB	**8**	**Emeke Egbule (Sr.)**	46	Jordan Milburn (Jr.)
ILB	**43**	**Leroy Godfrey (Jr.)**	49	David Anenih (So.)
ILB	58	Darrion Owens (Sr.)	20	Roman Brown (Sr.)
OLB	22	Austin Robinson (Sr.)	45	Jordan Carmouche (Jr.)
CB	14	Isaiah Johnson (Sr.)	16	Ka'Darian Smith (Jr.)
CB	**18**	**Alexander Myres (Sr.)**	19	Javian Smith (So.)
SS	**1**	**Garrett Davis (Sr.)**	21	Gleson Sprewell (So.)
FS	2	Deontay Anderson (So.)	29	Darius Gilbert (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	42	Caden Novikoff (Sr.)	KR	6	Jeremy Singleton (Fr.)
P	38	Dane Roy (Jr.)	PR	5	Marquez Stevenson (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: D'Eriq King, 139-90-1,260-2, 7 TDs
Rushing: Mulbah Car, 80 att., 388 yds., 3 TDs
Receiving: D'eriq King, 29 rec., 264 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Ed Oliver, 73
Sacks: Ed Oliver, 5.5
Interceptions: Garrett Davis, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Major Applewhite
Record at School: 7-6 (1+ year)
Career Record: 7-6 (1+ year)
Offensive Coordinator: Kendal Briles
Defensive Coordinator: Mark D'Onofrio
Houston, TX • TDECU Stadium (40,000)

@UHCougarFB

Memphis **Tigers**

National Forecast: **38** • AAC West Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **9-4, 6-2 AAC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Mercer
Sept.	8	at Navy
Sept.	14	Georgia State
Sept.	22	South Alabama
Sept.	28	at Tulane
Oct.	6	Connecticut
Oct.	13	UCF
Oct.	20	at Missouri
Nov.	3	at East Carolina
Nov.	10	Tulsa
Nov.	16	at SMU
Nov.	23	Houston

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 10-3, 7-1 AAC

Aug.	31	UL Monroe		W	37-29
Sept.	16	UCLA		W	48-45
Sept.	23	Southern Illinois		W	44-31
Sept.	30	at UCF		L	13-40
Oct.	6	at Connecticut		W	70-31
Oct.	14	Navy		W	30-27
Oct.	19	at Houston		W	42-38
Oct.	27	Tulane		W	56-26
Nov.	3	at Tulsa		W	41-14
Nov.	18	SMU		W	66-45
Nov.	25	East Carolina		W	70-13
Dec.	2	at UCF #	(ot)	L	55-62
Dec.	30	vs. Iowa State %		L	20-21

#AAC Championship %Liberty Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Antonio Gibson, WR, Stockbridge, GA*
2. Keith Brigham, DE, Normal, IL*
3. Troy Hurst, ATH, Greensburg, LA
4. Nigel Brannon, OT, Oklahoma City, OK
5. Will Lawrence, OG, Memphis, TN
6. Titus Jones, OG, New Orleans, LA
7. Kenny Gainwell, ATH, Yazoo City, MS
8. Quindell Johnson, S, New Orleans, LA
9. Jaylon Allen, OLB, Humble, TX
10. Brady McBride, QB, Coppell, TX

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	AAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	45.5 ppg	2	2
Rushing	197.1 ypg	6	34
Passing	335.0 ypg	1	7
Total	532.1 ypg	1	4
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	32.5 ppg	8	102
Rushing	184.2 ypg	6	85
Passing	282.1 ypg	10	122
Total	466.2 ypg	8	117
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
+15	+1.15	2	3

STAT CORNER

42.9

Through interceptions or breakups, Memphis was responsible for 42.9% of its opponents' incomplete passes, sixth in FBS.

OFFENSE A program that has benefited from five years of stellar quarterback play must find a successor to Riley Ferguson, who was a record-setting replacement two years ago for first-round NFL Draft pick Paxton Lynch. Sophomore David Moore, Ferguson's backup last season, will be a strong candidate to lead the Tigers and coach Mike Norvell to a fifth straight postseason appearance. Moore is a dual threat whose running ability may separate him from a pack that includes Arizona State transfer Brady White. He also has the strongest arm.

The Tigers will be stocked in the backfield, where 1,000-yard rusher Darrell Henderson returns along with Patrick Taylor. The speedy Henderson ran for 1,154 yards to become the program's first 1,000-yard rusher in eight years, while the bruising Taylor added 866 yards and 13 touchdowns, the most among the backs.

Memphis lost nearly 2,000 receiving yards with the departures of Anthony Miller and Phil Mayhue, but Louisiana natives Damonte Coxie and John "Pop" Williams should step up after displaying their talents last season. Coxie, 6'3" and 200 pounds, is the stat leader among the returning wideouts (21 catches for 323 yards).

The offensive line returns four starters, led by left tackle Trevon Tate, a first-team all-conference selection. Tate and center Drew Kyser are three-year starters.

DEFENSE Sophomore cornerback T.J. Carter leads the defense after a stellar season in which he earned multiple honors. Carter started 13 games and set a school record for interceptions by a freshman with five. He also had 11 pass breakups and two fumble recoveries, including one on the first snap of his career.

Senior Curtis Akins and junior Austin Hall, the team's top two tacklers, will lead the linebacking corps, along with sophomore Tim Hart, who emerged as a playmaker last season. The Tigers could get a boost from the return of oft-injured Jackson Dillon, who is hoping for a sixth season of eligibility after missing most of the past two seasons. If he's back, the Tigers gain a pass-rushing presence and disruptive force.

Up front, the Tigers return a productive trio in sophomores O'Bryan Goodson and Joseph Dorceus and junior Jonathan Wilson. They combined for 14 tackles for a loss.

To prosper, the Tigers must improve their overall play on defense after ranking 117th in the nation last year, allowing 466.2 yards per game.

SPECIALISTS Junior Tony Pollard is one of the nation's best return men. He had four kickoff returns for touchdowns last season to boost his career total to six, one shy of the NCAA record. The most competitive battle in the spring may have been for the punting job. After losing two effective veterans from last season, the Tigers turn to redshirt freshman Adam Williams and junior Aidan Daily.

FINAL ANALYSIS Memphis' upward trend continued in 2017. The Tigers won 10 games, played in the AAC title game and appeared in a bowl game for the fourth straight season — a first for the program. They were also ranked in the AP Top 25 every week beginning in mid-October. To maintain the momentum, Norvell must find the proper triggerman, since the Tigers will have an experienced offensive line and depth in the backfield to counter the loss of Miller and Mayhue. Defensively, the Tigers must overcome some alarming numbers and continue to win the turnover battle after ranking third nationally in that category a year ago at plus-1.15 per game.



DARRELL HENDERSON

"They're obviously going to have a drop-off replacing Riley Ferguson, but we don't expect it to be steep. They have been recruiting and developing at a high level."

— An opposing AAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)

WR	9	John Williams (Jr.)	1	Tony Pollard (Jr.)	
WR	10	Damonte Coxie (So.)	14	Antonio Gibson (Jr.)	
WR	13	Kedarian Jones (Jr.)	81	Mechane Slade (Jr.)	
LT	72	**Trevon Tate (Sr.)**	77	Obinna Eze (Fr.)	
LG	56	Dylan Parham (Fr.)	75	Tau Ho Ching (Jr.)	
C	54	**Drew Kyser (Sr.)**	64	Daly Cull (Fr.)	
RG	53	**Dustin Woodard (Jr.)**	63	Ryan Young (So.)	
RT	66	**Roger Joseph (Sr.)**	49	Scottie Dill (Jr.)	
TE	86	**Joey Magnifico (Jr.)**	5	**Sean Dykes (Jr.)**	
QB	2	David Moore (So.)	3	Brady White (Jr.)	
RB	8	**Darrell Henderson (Jr.)**	1	**Tony Pollard (Jr.)**	

DEFENSE (8)

DE	93	Desmond Hawkins (Jr.)	92	Jeremiah Maclin (Jr.)
DT	97	Emmanuel Cooper (Sr.)	38	**Jonathan Wilson (Jr.)**
NT	1	**O'Bryan Goodson (So.)**	94	Joseph Dorceus (So.)
KAT	34	Jackson Dillon (Sr.)	23	JJ Russell (So.)
LB	7	**Curtis Akins (Sr.)**	3	Keith Brown Jr. (Jr.)
LB	35	**Tim Hart (So.)**	55	Bryce Huff (Jr.)
STAR	25	**Austin Hall (Jr.)**	40	Thomas Pickens (So.)
CB	24	**Tito Windham (Sr.)**	22	Tyrez Lindsey (So.)
CB	2	**T.J. Carter (So.)**	16	Nehemiah Augustus (So.)
S	4	**Josh Perry (So.)**	41	Sanchez Blake Jr. (Fr.)
S	12	La'Andre Thomas (So.)	29	Carlito Gonzalez (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	36	Riley Patterson (So.)	KR	1	Tony Pollard (Jr.)
P	48	Adam Williams (Fr.)	PR	9	John Williams (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: David Moore, 10-7-63-0, 1 TD
Rushing: Darrell Henderson, 130 att., 1,154 yds., 9 TDs
Receiving: Tony Pollard, 36 rec., 536 yds., 4 TDs
Tackles: Curtis Akins, 88
Sacks: Bryce Huff, 2.0; Jonathan Wilson, 2.0
Interceptions: T.J. Carter, 5

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mike Norvell
Record at School: 18-8 (2 years)
Career Record: 18-8 (2 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Kenny Dillingham
Defensive Coordinator: Chris Ball
Memphis, TN • Liberty Bowl (56,862)

Joe Murphy/University of Memphis

Navy **Midshipmen**

National Forecast: **47** • AAC West Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **9-4, 5-3 AAC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at Hawaii
Sept.	8	Memphis
Sept.	15	Lehigh
Sept.	22	at SMU
Oct.	6	at Air Force
Oct.	13	Temple
Oct.	20	Houston
Oct.	27	vs. Notre Dame #
Nov.	3	at Cincinnati
Nov.	10	at UCF
Nov.	17	Tulsa
Nov.	24	at Tulane
Dec.	8	vs. Army %

#San Diego %Philadelphia

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 4-4 AAC

Sept.	1	at Florida Atlantic	W	42-19
Sept.	9	Tulane	W	23-21
Sept.	23	Cincinnati	W	42-32
Sept.	30	at Tulsa	W	31-21
Oct.	7	Air Force	W	48-45
Oct.	14	at Memphis	L	27-30
Oct.	21	UCF	L	21-31
Nov.	2	at Temple	L	26-34
Nov.	11	SMU	W	43-40
Nov.	18	at Notre Dame	L	17-24
Nov.	24	at Houston	L	14-24
Dec.	9	vs. Army #	L	13-14
Dec.	28	vs. Virginia %	W	49-7

#Philadelphia %Military Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Kevin Brennan, S, Ramsey, NJ
2. Trace Oldner, OG, Richmond, TX
3. Jalen Smith, WR, Virginia Beach, VA
4. Jordan Cooper, ATH, New Caney, TX
5. Joseph Petti, DT, Bronx, NY
6. Collins Woods, WR, Eight Mile, AL
7. James Stagg, TE, Phoenix, AZ
8. Devin Mathews, OLB, Palm Coast, FL
9. Caleb Grimes, RB, Richmond, VA
10. Daniel Taylor, CB, Brentwood, TN

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	AAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	30.5 ppg	5	48
Rushing	351.4 ypg	1	2
Passing	77.3 ypg	12	129
Total	428.7 ypg	5	39
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	26.3 ppg	5	62
Rushing	154.5 ypg	3	52
Passing	215.8 ypg	2	54
Total	370.3 ypg	2	48
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
-3	-0.23	8	85

STAT CORNER

9.1

Navy gained at least 10 yards on 9.1 carries per game, fifth most in FBS but third out of three among service academies.

OFFENSE Navy is handing the reins to its patented triple-option to Malcolm Perry, who showed in a limited sample size last season that he is an extremely dangerous running threat. Perry rushed for 646 yards and seven touchdowns in three starts at quarterback. "Malcolm is the most dynamic runner we've had during my time here," says Ken Niumatalolo, who has spent 21 years in Annapolis (11 as head coach).

Perry spent the spring focused on improving as a passer. He attempted just two passes last season, and one was intercepted.

Navy has another talented quarterback in Zach Abey, whose 1,413 rushing yards in 2017 were the second most in school history behind Napoleon McCallum (1,587 in 1983). Niumatalolo is planning to play both quarterbacks, with Abey being used primarily in short-yardage situations.

Anthony Gargiulo emerged as a battering ram of a fullback late in the season. Keoni-Kordell Makekau was impressive as a freshman and could be the next in a long line of dynamic slot backs for the Mids.

Navy has a pair of talented tackles in Andrew Wood and Jake Hawk but must rebuild the interior of the offensive line after graduating all three starters.

DEFENSE Defensive coordinator Dale Pehrson dialed down the more aggressive approach he implemented in 2016, and Navy improved across the board in 2017. Not bad considering the Midshipmen faced five of the top 30 statistical offenses in the FBS.

The Midshipmen must replace some key leaders from the 2017 defense — most notably outside linebacker D.J. Palmore, inside linebacker Micah Thomas and cornerback Tyris Wooten. Junior Nizaire Cromartie, who had five tackles for a loss in limited action last season, has been moved from defensive end to replace Palmore. Cromartie is explosive coming off the edge and has potential to be a dangerous pass rusher.

Hudson Sullivan, who recorded 40 tackles in just six games a year ago, figures to succeed Thomas as the top tackler in Navy's 3-4 scheme. Free safety Sean Williams, an honorable mention All-AAC pick in 2017, is the top returning defender. Williams has made 25 starts and recorded 163 tackles in his career.

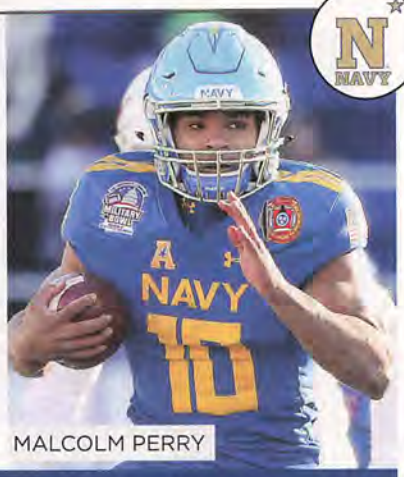
SPECIALISTS Placekicker Bennett Moehring made 7-of-10 field goals from 20 to 29 yards but was just 1-of-5 from farther out. He narrowly missed a 48-yarder on a snow-covered field that would have been the game winner against Army. Owen White was a pleasant surprise in his first season as the punter.

FINAL ANALYSIS After losing to archrival Army for the second straight year, Navy closed on a positive note by routing Virginia 49–7 in the Military Bowl to post a winning record for the 14th time in the last 15 seasons.

Navy's offense became one-dimensional during the second half of the season since Abey was strictly an inside runner. Perry provides the all-important perimeter element of the triple-option, and Niumatalolo is confident the offense will be more effective with him at the controls.

Navy will travel an incredible 26,496 miles this season due to its six road and two neutral-site games. Niumatalolo is not thrilled about facing defending AAC West Division champ Memphis on the heels of traveling to Hawaii for the season opener. This year's game against Notre Dame is in San Diego.

Perry figures to have a huge season if he stays healthy, and Navy's triple-option attack should continue to confound AAC opponents enough to ensure another winning season.



MALCOLM PERRY

"It's possible to get ahead of them because they lack for elite talent on defense, but if you start screwing around and making mistakes, they will wear you out."

— An opposing AAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (4)

WR	87	Ryan Mitchell (So.)	86	O.J. Davis (Jr.)	
WR	89	Taylor Jackson (Sr.)	47	Aleksei Yaramus (Jr.)	
LT	**57**	**Jake Hawk (Sr.)**	76	Kendel Wright (Jr.)	
LG	68	David Forney (Jr.)	78	Laurent Njiki (Sr.)	
C	72	Ford Higgins (Jr.)	77	Bryan Barrett (Sr.)	
RG	64	Steve Satchell (Sr.)	67	Chris Gesell (Sr.)	
RT	**61**	**Andrew Wood (Sr.)**	69	Adam Amosa-Tagovailoa (Sr.)	
QB	**10**	**Malcolm Perry (Jr.)**	**9**	**Zach Abey (Sr.)**	
SB	21	Tre Walker (Sr.)	8	Tazh Maloy (Jr.)	
SB	28	Keoni-Kordell Makekau (So.)	2	C.J. Williams (So.)	
FB	38	Anthony Gargiulo (Sr.)	43	Nelson Smith (So.)	

DEFENSE (4)

DE	**90**	**Jarvis Polu (Sr.)**	95	Anthony Villalobos (Sr.)
NG	**99**	**Jackson Pittman (Jr.)**	65	Alema Kapoi (So.)
DE	92	Josh Webb (Jr.)	69	Marcus Edwards (Jr.)
OLB	37	Elan Nash (Jr.)	36	Forrest Forte (Sr.)
ILB	53	Hudson Sullivan (Sr.)	84	Pepe Tanuvasa (So.)
ILB	54	Taylor Heflin (Sr.)	83	Griffin Baumoel (So.)
OLB	56	Nizaire Cromartie (Jr.)	48	Tory Delmonico (Sr.)
CB	32	Micah Farrar (So.)	7	Khaylan Williams (Sr.)
CB	**2**	**Jarid Ryan (Sr.)**	23	Cameron Kinley (So.)
SS	13	Juan Hailey (Sr.)	5	Evan Fochtman (So.)
FS	**6**	**Sean Williams (Sr.)**	1	Jake Springer (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	16	Bennett Moehring (Sr.)	**KR**	21	Tre Walker (Sr.)
P	4	Owen White (Jr.)	**PR**	2	Jarid Ryan (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Zach Abey, 72-31-805-7, 7 TDs
Rushing: Zach Abey, 293 att., 1,413 yds., 19 TDs
Receiving: Malcolm Perry, 13 rec., 303 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Sean Williams, 76
Sacks: Josh Webb, 4.0
Interceptions: Three players tied with 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Ken Niumatalolo
Record at School: 84-48 (10+ years)
Career Record: 84-48 (10+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Ivin Jasper
Defensive Coordinator: Dale Pehrson
Annapolis, MD • Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium (34,000)

Getty Images

SMU Mustangs

National Forecast: **91** • AAC West Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **6-6, 4-4 AAC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at North Texas
Sept.	7	TCU
Sept.	15	at Michigan
Sept.	22	Navy
Sept.	29	Houston Baptist
Oct.	6	at UCF
Oct.	20	at Tulane
Oct.	27	Cincinnati
Nov.	3	Houston
Nov.	10	at Connecticut
Nov.	16	Memphis
Nov.	24	at Tulsa

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 4-4 AAC

Sept.	2	Stephen F. Austin	W	58-14
Sept.	9	North Texas	W	54-32
Sept.	16	at TCU	L	36-56
Sept.	23	Arkansas State	W	44-21
Sept.	30	Connecticut	W	49-28
Oct.	7	at Houston	L	22-35
Oct.	21	at Cincinnati (ot)	W	31-28
Oct.	27	Tulsa	W	38-34
Nov.	4	UCF	L	24-31
Nov.	11	at Navy	L	40-43
Nov.	18	at Memphis	L	45-66
Nov.	25	Tulane	W	41-38
Dec.	20	vs. Louisiana Tech #	L	10-51

#Frisco Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Treveon Johnson, WR, Brenham, TX
2. Levon Livingston, OT, Washington, DC
3. Shabazz Dotson, DT, Cedar Hill, TX
4. TaMerik Williams, RB, Angleton, TX
5. William Brown, QB, Rosenberg, TX
6. Ben Redding, TE, Friendswood, TX
7. Preston Ellison, S, Odessa, TX
8. Darren Brown, DT, Converse, TX
9. Trevor Denbow, OLB, Corsicana, TX*
10. Robert Hayes, CB, Slidell, LA*

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	AAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	37.8 ppg	4	12
Rushing	184.4 ypg	7	42
Passing	294.1 ypg	4	19
Total	478.5 ypg	4	15
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	36.7 ppg	9	118
Rushing	207.7 ypg	9	108
Passing	269.0 ypg	8	118
Total	476.7 ypg	9	122
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
+4	+0.31	5	40

STAT CORNER

29.5

SMU averaged 29.5 points in its six losses, tied with Texas A&M for the most in the nation for teams with more than three defeats.

OFFENSE SMU's success will depend heavily on junior quarterback Ben Hicks grasping the nuances of new coach Sonny Dykes' Air Raid scheme. Hicks made significant strides during Chad Morris' tenure, setting the school record for career touchdown passes. He threw for 3,569 yards and 33 touchdowns with 12 interceptions last season, but he must improve his decision making under pressure. His second season featured 42 more completed passes, a better completion percentage (from 55.5 to 58.5) and three fewer interceptions (12). But he will need a more dramatic jump to compensate for the loss of 1,000-yard receivers Courtland Sutton and Trey Quinn to the NFL. They combined for 182 catches in 2017.

Lack of depth at wide receiver and on the offensive line will magnify the challenge of the offensive transition. James Proche, overshadowed by Sutton and Quinn, is a dangerous receiver who can spread the field, and he should thrive with increased touches, provided some other threats emerge. Dykes has moved players around in the hope of getting the ball in the hands of playmakers. Expect talented running back Braeden West to be used in multiple roles, including the slot. He averaged 7.8 yards on his 73 rushing attempts and also caught 18 passes last season. Running backs Xavier Jones, a 1,000-yard rusher in 2017, and Ke'Mon Freeman provide a strong one-two punch. The line is solid with four starters back, but depth could be an issue.

DEFENSE Needing major improvement on the front seven, the Mustangs instead took a step back last year. Poor tackling fundamentals overall and mistakes in the secondary yielded too many big plays. They ranked 122nd in total defense, allowing 476.7 yards and 36.7 points per game. Surrendering big gains on simple plays often countered the offense's production. Dykes brought in coordinator Kevin Kane from Northern Illinois to turn things around. Kane's system and his attack mentality certainly worked at NIU, which ranked seventh nationally in yards allowed per play last season. SMU, which operated in a 4-2-5 last year, has changed to a 4-3-4 scheme. The new regime has emphasized physical play and winning the line of scrimmage.

Replacing the multiple contributions of defensive end Justin Lawler, a team leader, will be difficult. The Mustangs have some depth up front, but also some inexperience. Cornerback Jordan Wyatt, who is recovering from a knee injury, has been a major force the past two seasons. Richard Moore, a transfer from Texas A&M, has turned heads with his aggressive play and will add a dynamic edge to the linebacking crew.

SPECIALISTS The Mustangs desperately need special teams to help overcome weaknesses elsewhere. They changed placekickers midway through 2017 because of Josh Williams' struggles. Kevin Robledo, a Florida State transfer, made the only field goal he attempted. Another question mark will be finding a punt returner to replace Quinn. Proche seems the obvious choice here because of his speed and elusiveness.

FINAL ANALYSIS SMU is coming off its first bowl appearance in five years, so the framework is set. Dykes is a proven offensive guru with a scheme that should ease the transition to the new staff. Kane's back-to-basics renovation of the defense should at least reduce the number of back-breaking plays allowed. If the Mustangs can make a marked improvement on defense, stay healthy on the offensive line and develop some playmakers, they could find themselves in another bowl game.



BEN HICKS

"This league doesn't let you play as pass heavy as the Big 12, and (Sonny Dykes) knows that. They'll run the ball more than you might think."

— An opposing AAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)					
WR	**3**	**James Proche (Jr.)**	10	Brandon Benson (So.)	
WR	22	Myron Gailliard (Jr.)	4	Tyler Page (So.)	
WR	86	Judah Bell (Fr.)	11	Armanii Glaspie (Jr.)	
LT	**57**	**Chad Pursley (Sr.)**	65	Matthew Huhn (Fr.)	
LG	**75**	**Hayden Howerton (So.)**	**68**	**Nick Natour (Sr.)**	
C	72	Nick Dennis (Jr.)	56	Harrison Barton (So.)	
RG	69	Jacob Todora (So.)	**64**	**Bryce Wilds (Jr.)**	
RT	76	Levon Livingston (Jr.)	77	Alan Ali (So.)	
TE	14	Ryan Becker (Jr.)	82	Corey Rau (So.)	
QB	**8**	**Ben Hicks (Jr.)**	7	D.J. Gillins (Sr.)	
RB	**5**	**Xavier Jones (Jr.)**	13	Ke'Mon Freeman (Jr.)	
DEFENSE (7)					
DE	13	Tyeson Neals (Jr.)	38	Toby Ndukwe (Fr.)	
DT	**51**	**Pono Davis (Jr.)**	90	Ken McLaurin (So.)	
DT	10	Demerick Gary (Jr.)	94	Chris Biggurs (Jr.)	
DE	35	Delontae Scott (Jr.)	72	Patrick Jones (So.)	
OLB	14	Richard Moore (Jr.)	22	Matt McNew (Sr.)	
ILB	**11**	**Kyran Mitchell (Sr.)**	**17**	**Jordon Williams (Jr.)**	
OLB	16	Trevor Denbow (So.)	9	Shaine Hailey (So.)	
CB	**15**	**Jordan Wyatt (Sr.)**	29	Justin Guy-Robinson (So.)	
CB	**28**	**Christian Davis (Jr.)**	12	Kevin Johnson (Jr.)	
S	**4**	**Mikial Onu (Jr.)**	6	Elijah McQueen (So.)	
S	**8**	**Rodney Clemons (Jr.)**	21	Kayce Medlock (So.)	
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K	47	Jamie Sackville (Jr.)	**KR**	12	Kevin Johnson (Jr.)
P	5	Josh Williams (Jr.)	**PR**	3	James Proche (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Ben Hicks, 472-276-3,569-12, 33 TDs
Rushing: Xavier Jones, 182 att., 1,075 yds., 9 TDs
Receiving: James Proche, 40 rec., 816 yds., 6 TDs
Tackles: Mikial Onu, 105
Sacks: Kyran Mitchell, 4.5; Tyeson Neals, 4.5
Interceptions: Jordan Wyatt, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Sonny Dykes
Record at School: 0-1 (1 game)
Career Record: 41-46 (7+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Rhett Lashlee
Defensive Coordinator: Kevin Kane
Dallas, TX • Gerald J. Ford Stadium (32,000)

SportsOnline Media LLC/SMU Athletics

Tulane **Green Wave**

National Forecast: **90** • AAC West Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **6-6, 4-4 AAC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	Wake Forest
Sept.	8	Nicholls
Sept.	15	at UAB
Sept.	22	at Ohio State
Sept.	28	Memphis
Oct.	6	at Cincinnati
Oct.	20	SMU
Oct.	27	at Tulsa
Nov.	3	at South Florida
Nov.	10	East Carolina
Nov.	15	at Houston
Nov.	24	Navy

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 3-5 AAC

Sept.	2	Grambling	W	43-14
Sept.	9	at Navy	L	21-23
Sept.	16	at Oklahoma	L	14-56
Sept.	23	Army	W	21-17
Oct.	7	Tulsa	W	62-28
Oct.	14	at FIU	L	10-23
Oct.	21	South Florida	L	28-34
Oct.	27	at Memphis	L	26-56
Nov.	4	Cincinnati	L	16-17
Nov.	11	at East Carolina (ot)	W	31-24
Nov.	18	Houston	W	20-17
Nov.	25	at SMU	L	38-41

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Jeffery Johnson, DT, Brookhaven, MS
2. Dorian Camel, S, Baton Rouge, LA
3. Alfred Thomas, DT, Montgomery, AL
4. La'Dedric Jackson, OLB, Montgomery, AL
5. Juan Monjarres, DE, New Orleans, LA
6. Nik Hogan, OL, Flowood, MS
7. Jorien Vallien, WR, Alexandria, LA
8. Jason Swann, OT, Pembroke Pines, FL
9. Jamiran James, DT, New Orleans, LA
10. Larry Brooks, S, Kennedale, TX

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	AAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	27.5 ppg	8	74
Rushing	231.5 ypg	4	20
Passing	160.0 ypg	11	117
Total	391.5 ypg	10	75
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	29.2 ppg	6	84
Rushing	210.4 ypg	10	112
Passing	225.7 ypg	3	68
Total	436.1 ypg	7	99
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
+8	+0.67	4	20

STAT CORNER

-20

Tulane's point differential was minus-199 in 2015 but minus-43 in Willie Fritz's first year and minus-20 in 2017. Solid growth.

OFFENSE Look for a productive offense that finally meets coach Willie Fritz's expectations after a pair of frustrating building years. Along the way, the notion of his relying on a one-dimensional, ground-bound approach will become a relic of the past. Dual-threat quarterback Jonathan Banks threw for 565 yards in the final two games of 2017, leading an upset of Houston and a near-upset of SMU. Banks picked up where he left off in the spring. It helps tremendously that he is playing in the same system for the first time after one-year stints at Kansas State and two junior colleges.

Another plus is his rapport with returning wide receivers Terren Encalade (39 catches, 730 yards), Darnell Mooney (34, 599) and Jabril Clewis.

The running game, which averaged 231.5 yards, should be fine despite the loss of 1,000-yard rusher Dontrell Hilliard. Converted quarterback Darius Bradwell, whom Louisville recruited hard as a running back, is faster than his 6'1", 235-pound frame would suggest. He learned on the job last year but still averaged 6.2 yards on 66 attempts. Speedy Texas Tech transfer Corey Dauphine is a nice complement to Bradwell, and sophomore Stephon Huderson enjoyed a strong spring.

Tulane's biggest concerns are replacing center Junior Diaz, who left for Florida Atlantic as a grad transfer, and keeping Banks healthy. Every other starter on the line returns, but the Wave will be in a world of hurt if Banks gets injured. Top backups Johnathan Brantley and Khalil McClain transferred after the season.

DEFENSE A group that finished in the middle of the pack statistically will have an altered philosophy after losing five of its top nine tacklers and moving two others to new positions. The key departure is first-team All-AAC cornerback Parry Nickerson, who tied for the fastest 40 time at the NFL Combine by any defensive back. The Wave want more speed in the lineup, having been burned for big plays too often a year ago.

Natural cornerback P.J. Hall moved to strong safety in the spring, putting a third one-on-one cover guy on the field and relegating Chase Kuerschen to reserve linebacker. Roderic Teamer, a big hitter, switched to free safety. Donnie Lewis, a third-year starter, has the skills to replace Nickerson but needs to be better with the ball in the air.

Linebacker Zachery Harris and tackle Cameron Sample are the top playmakers up front along with end Robert Kennedy, who missed the first seven games last year with a knee injury. True freshman Jeffery Johnson, a one-time Alabama and Florida State recruit who enrolled for the spring, is the likely starter at nose guard.

SPECIALISTS Fritz has shored up the coverage units, but the kicking game remains a work in progress. Walk-on Merek Glover made 8-of-9 field goals, but his longest was 37 yards. His job is not secure. Freshman punter Ryan Wright will challenge incumbent Zach Block, who averaged 39.2 yards in 2017.

FINAL ANALYSIS Fritz has this program moving in the right direction, and anything short of a bowl bid in his third year will be a disappointment. Tulane came an inch shy in 2017, finishing 5–7 when a replay official upheld a call that Banks was tackled short of the goal line on the last play at SMU.

Banks is the catalyst. If he improves as expected, the offense will be much more formidable after scoring 21 or fewer points six times last season and finishing near the bottom of the league in third-down conversions. The defense will benefit by not having to be on the field as much.



JONATHAN BANKS

"The talent still isn't all the way there, but we expect them to be much more multiple and creative with their passing game (next) season."

— An opposing AAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (9)

WR	**5**	**Terren Encalade (Sr.)**	87	Kevin LeDee (Fr.)
WR	**3**	**Darnell Mooney (Jr.)**	15	Jacob Robertson (So.)
WR	**88**	**Jabril Clewis (Sr.)**	82	Jaetavian Toles (So.)
LT	53	Keyshawn McLeod (Jr.)	**50**	**Tyler Johnson (Jr.)**
LG		Bailey Granier (Sr.)	63	Cameron Jackel (Fr.)
C	**64**	**Corey Dublin (So.)**	69	Hunter Knighton (Sr.)
RG	**52**	**Dominique Briggs (Sr.)**		Nik Hogan (Fr.)
RT	**72**	**John Leglue (Sr.)**	79	Joey Claybrook (Fr.)
TE	**84**	**Charles Jones (Sr.)**	89	Kendall Ardoin (Sr.)
QB	**1**	**Jonathan Banks (Sr.)**	2	Dane Ledford (So.)
RB	10	Darius Bradwell (Jr.)	6	Corey Dauphine (Jr.)

DEFENSE (3)

DE	34	Patrick Johnson (So.)	4	Larry Bryant (Jr.)
DT	55	Cameron Sample (So.)	48	De'Andre Williams (So.)
NG	77	Jeffery Johnson (Fr.)	78	Davon Wright (Fr.)
DE	90	Robert Kennedy (Sr.)	57	Peter Woullard (Sr.)
ILB	**40**	**Zachery Harris (Sr.)**	28	Marvin Moody (So.)
ILB	35	Lawrence Graham (Jr.)	38	KJ Vault (So.)
NB	33	Tirise Barge (So.)	25	Will Harper (Jr.)
CB	**1**	**Donnie Lewis (Sr.)**	8	Willie Langham (Fr.)
CB	23	Jaylon Monroe (So.)	26	Thakarius Keyes (Jr.)
SS	16	P.J. Hall (Jr.)	19	Taris Shenall (Sr.)
FS	**2**	**Roderic Teamer (Sr.)**	12	Sean Harper (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	62	Merek Glover (Jr.)	**KR**	6	Corey Dauphine (Jr.)
P	49	Zach Block (Sr.)	**PR**	15	Jacob Robertson (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Jonathan Banks, 219-124-1,797-5, 12 TDs
Rushing: Jonathan Banks, 148 att., 592 yds., 7 TDs
Receiving: Terren Encalade, 39 rec., 730 yds., 4 TDs
Tackles: Zachery Harris, 69
Sacks: Three players tied with 1.0
Interceptions: Donnie Lewis Jr., 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Willie Fritz
Record at School: 9-15 (2 years)
Career Record: 163-84 (21 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Doug Ruse
Defensive Coordinator: Jack Curtis
New Orleans, LA • Yulman Stadium (30,000)

Tulane Athletics

Tulsa **Golden Hurricane**

National Forecast: **108** • AAC West Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **4-8, 2-6 AAC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Central Arkansas
Sept.	8	at Texas
Sept.	15	Arkansas State
Sept.	20	at Temple
Oct.	4	at Houston
Oct.	12	South Florida
Oct.	20	at Arkansas
Oct.	27	Tulane
Nov.	3	Connecticut
Nov.	10	at Memphis
Nov.	17	at Navy
Nov.	24	SMU

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 2-10, 1-7 AAC

Aug.	31	at Oklahoma State	L	24-59
Sept.	9	UL Lafayette	W	66-42
Sept.	16	at Toledo	L	51-54
Sept.	23	New Mexico	L	13-16
Sept.	30	Navy	L	21-31
Oct.	7	at Tulane	L	28-62
Oct.	14	Houston	W	45-17
Oct.	21	at Connecticut	L	14-20
Oct.	27	at SMU	L	34-38
Nov.	3	Memphis	L	14-41
Nov.	16	at South Florida	L	20-27
Nov.	25	Temple	L	22-43

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Jaxon Player, DT, Waco, TX
2. Davis Brin, QB, Boerne, TX
3. Jabari James, CB, Missouri City, TX
4. Marquez Perez, WR, College Station, TX
5. Anthony Goodlow, OLB, Del City, OK
6. TK Wilkerson, RB, Skiatook OK
7. Brandon Johnson, S, Dallas, TX*
8. TieNeal Martin, OLB, Sacramento, CA*
9. Malik Welch, S, Inglewood, CA*
10. Jajuan Blankenship, DT, Anderson, SC*

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	AAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	29.3 ppg	6	54
Rushing	247.3 ypg	3	14
Passing	173.1 ypg	10	110
Total	420.3 ypg	8	44
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	37.5 ppg	10	121
Rushing	265.0 ypg	12	128
Passing	263.9 ypg	6	112
Total	528.9 ypg	11	128
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**AAC**	**NATIONAL**
+1	+0.08	6	59

STAT CORNER

7.3

Tulsa went from allowing 5.5 yards per play (49th in FBS) to 7.3 in 2017 (129th), easily the worst increase in the country.

Erik Campos

OFFENSE Last year, inconsistency at quarterback resulted in Tulsa's worst passing season since 1995. First-year starters Chad President and Luke Skipper combined for only six touchdowns one season after the Golden Hurricane ranked second in the AAC with 33 TD passes. Skipper emerged in the second half of the season and ended the year with an impressive average of 9.0 yards per attempt (compared to 5.9 for President). Skipper's continued development under quarterback guru Philip Montgomery is key in 2018.

Helping the cause are top targets Justin Hobbs and Keenen Johnson, who totaled 1,369 yards on 99 catches last year. Tulsa also has talented up-and-comers in Keylon Stokes, Josh Stewart and Sam Crawford Jr., expanding what has been a small circle of trust within the receiving corps.

An area of lesser concern is running back, where Shamari Brooks is the heir apparent to rushing leader D'Angelo Brewer after a freshman campaign in which Brooks rushed for 10 touchdowns in nine games before a season-ending injury. Hopes are high for a breakout year from Corey Taylor, who was lost for the season in the second game of 2017.

A savvy offensive line anchored by fourth-year center Chandler Miller remains Tulsa's strength. Veterans Willie Wright (right tackle) and Tyler Bowling (left guard) also return up front.

DEFENSE An already inexperienced defense was decimated by injuries last season, playing a significant role in the Hurricane giving up a whopping 528.9 yards per game. When starting safeties Jordan Mitchell and Manny Bunch went down with torn ACLs, the situation went from bad to nightmarish, and Tulsa led FBS by giving up 31 plays of at least 40 yards.

In an attempt to turn the tide, Montgomery added seven junior college transfers to his defense. Three of them will play on a defensive line that must replace standout ends Jesse Brubaker and Jeremy Smith and also must fix issues on the interior that led to constant shuffling there.

At linebacker, starters Cooper Edmiston and Diamon Cannon are back in addition to several contributors from last year, including Robert Revels III, who is expected to move into the starting lineup.

Coming to the aid of a shaky secondary in 2017 was linebacker McKinley Whitfield, who moved to safety and will remain there with Bunch and Mitchell. Reggie Robinson headlines a cornerback group that boasts increased depth after relying on true freshmen Akayleb Evans and Allie Green last season.

SPECIALISTS Punter Thomas Bennett was solid in his first season, averaging 42.3 yards — third in the league — on his 61 kicks. Walk-on placekicker Nathan Walker is the frontrunner to replace Redford Jones, the program's all-time leading scorer. Adam Higuera, the deep snapper, scored Tulsa's first TD of 2017 on a recovered fumble in the end zone.

FINAL ANALYSIS A 10-loss season on the heels of a 10-win season was a stunning downturn marked by bad luck. In addition to a rash of 16 knee injuries, Tulsa lost five games that came down to the final possession. In what could be a defining fourth year for Montgomery, Tulsa needs to show significant progress at quarterback and on defense to avoid a second straight last-place finish in the AAC West. And with a non-conference slate that features visits to Texas and Arkansas, reaching bowl eligibility will likely be a challenge.



JUSTIN HOBBS

"There were a lot of visible problems with their offense last season, but they were better than their record (2-10) would tell you."

— An opposing AAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	**29**	**Justin Hobbs (Sr.)**	23	Jordan Brown (So.)
WR	**1**	**Josh Stewart (So.)**	9	Sam Crawford Jr. (Fr.)
WR	**8**	**Keenen Johnson (Jr.)**	2	Keylon Stokes (So.)
LT	65	Chris Ivy (Jr.)	76	Waahid Muhammad (So.)
LG	**72**	**Tyler Bowling (Sr.)**	75	Dante Bivens (Fr.)
C	**74**	**Chandler Miller (Sr.)**	63	Judge Hartin (Jr.)
RG	68	Tiller Bucktrot (So.)	67	Tristan Wyatt (Jr.)
RT	**58**	**Willie Wright (Sr.)**	71	Chris Paul (Fr.)
TE	**6**	**Chris Minter (Sr.)**	38	Cole Neph (Sr.)
QB	13	Luke Skipper (So.)	12	Seth Boomer (Fr.)
RB	3	Shamari Brooks (So.)	24	Corey Taylor (So.)

DEFENSE (5)

DE	96	Myles Mouton (Sr.)	91	Cullen Wick (So.)
DT	97	Tyarise Stevenson (So.)	55	Garrett Flanary (So.)
DT	**54**	**Shemarr Robinson (Jr.)**	93	JaJuan Blankenship (Jr.)
DE	15	Trevis Gipson (Jr.)	58	Deven Lamp (Fr.)
STAR	**6**	**Diamon Cannon (Jr.)**	35	Yohance Burnett (Jr.)
MLB	**42**	**Cooper Edmiston (Jr.)**	23	Zaven Collins (Fr.)
OLB	4	Robert Revels III (Jr.)	24	Treyvon Reeves (So.)
CB	**9**	**Reggie Robinson (Jr.)**	26	Akayleb Evans (So.)
CB	7	Malik Welch (So.)	12	Allie Green (So.)
SS	10	Manny Bunch (Jr.)	3	Cristian Williams (Jr.)
FS	5	**McKinley Whitfield (Sr.)**	13	Jordan Mitchell (Sr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	90	Nathan Walker (Sr.)	**KR**	2 Keylon Stokes (So.)
P	23	Thomas Bennett (Jr.)	**PR**	16 Jarion Anderson (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Luke Skipper, 127-71-1,141-4, 3 TDs
Rushing: Shamari Brooks, 119 att., 687 yds., 10 TDs
Receiving: Justin Hobbs, 55 rec., 830 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: McKinley Whitfield, 113
Sacks: Garrett Flanary, 1.0
Interceptions: Five players tied with 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Philip Montgomery
Record at School: 18-20 (3 years)
Career Record: 18-20 (3 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Philip Montgomery
Defensive Coordinator: Bill Young
Tulsa, OK • H.A. Chapman Stadium (30,000)

BIG 12 PREVIEW

Predicted Order of Finish



1 OKLAHOMA **SOONERS**
11-2, 7-2 Big 12



2 TEXAS **LONGHORNS**
9-4, 6-3 Big 12



3 WEST VIRGINIA **MOUNTAINEERS**
8-4, 6-3 Big 12



4 TCU **HORNED FROGS**
8-4, 6-3 Big 12



5 OKLAHOMA STATE **COWBOYS**
8-4, 5-4 Big 12

6 IOWA STATE **CYCLONES**
7-5, 5-4 Big 12



7 KANSAS STATE **WILDCATS**
6-6, 4-5 Big 12



8 BAYLOR **BEARS**
6-6, 3-6 Big 12



9 TEXAS TECH **RED RAIDERS**
5-7, 3-6 Big 12



10 KANSAS **JAYHAWKS**
2-10, 0-9 Big 12



Big 12 Championship: **Oklahoma over Texas**

Games to Watch

SEPT. 1
WEST VIRGINIA VS. TENNESSEE
A first-ever meeting between these teams in the Belk College Kickoff in Charlotte. The Mountaineers should score a ton of points.

SEPT. 8
UCLA AT OKLAHOMA
Gone are the marquee quarterbacks from a year ago, but there's much to like with two historic programs and a classic uniform matchup.

SEPT. 8
MISS. STATE AT KANSAS STATE
That's right — an appealing non-conference foe for the Wildcats. And a chance to strike a blow against a good team from the mighty SEC.

SEPT. 15
BOISE STATE AT OKLAHOMA STATE
The Broncos look serious, coming off a Mountain West title run and a bowl throttling of Oregon. The Pokes look to stress reload over rebuild.

SEPT. 15
OKLAHOMA AT IOWA STATE
Remember when the Cyclones rolled into Norman and stunned the Sooners last October? This early league opener sets up as a showdown.

SEPT. 15
TCU VS. OHIO STATE
Both teams will be rolling with new QBs, but defense could be the theme as these two bid for early traction on the national stage in Arlington.

R. Anderson: Peter Brouillet (L) Getty (R); Ehlinger: Layne Murdoch; Grier, Hill: Bruce Schwartzman; D. Anderson: Jay Biggerstaff; Montgomery: Tom Lynn; Mims: Icon Sportswire via AP Images; Allen: Herbert, Risner: Tim Umphrey

2018 Unit Rankings

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
BAYLOR	2	8	3	9	8	9	8
IOWA STATE	3	3	6	6	5	2	4
KANSAS	10	10	9	10	10	8	10
KANSAS STATE	6	6	10	1	6	10	2
OKLAHOMA	4	1	2	2	4	3	6
OKLAHOMA STATE	8	2	4	7	3	7	5
TCU	7	4	5	8	2	6	3
TEXAS	5	7	7	5	1	1	1
TEXAS TECH	9	9	8	4	7	4	7
WEST VIRGINIA	1	5	1	3	9	6	9


DALTON RISNER, KANSAS STATE

Recruiting by School

1. Texas
2. Oklahoma
3. TCU
4. Baylor
5. Oklahoma State
6. West Virginia
7. Iowa State
8. Kansas
9. Kansas State
10. Texas Tech


RODNEY ANDERSON, OKLAHOMA

2018 Bowl Projections

Sugar Bowl: Oklahoma vs. Auburn

Camping World Bowl: Texas vs. Florida State

Alamo Bowl: West Virginia vs. USC

Texas: TCU vs. LSU

Liberty Bowl: Oklahoma State vs. Kentucky

Cactus: Iowa State vs. Utah

Armed Forces Bowl: Kansas State vs. Houston

Big-12 Coordinator Carousel

Kansas: Defense
New: Clint Bowen
Old: Clint Bowen, Kenny Perry

Kansas State: Offense
New: Andre Coleman
Old: Dana Dimel

Kansas State: Defense
New: Brian Norwood, Blake Seiler
Old: Tom Hayes

Oklahoma State: Defense
New: Jim Knowles
Old: Glenn Spencer

Texas: Offense
Old: Tim Beck
New: Tim Beck, Herb Hand

Texas Tech: Offense
New: Kevin Johns
Old: Eric Morris

Texas Tech: Defense
New: David Gibbs, Zac Spavital
Old: David Gibbs

SEPT. 15
USC AT TEXAS
A tasty pairing of college football bluebloods, although they've both dipped since that epic BCS title tilt in 2006 in the Rose Bowl.

SEPT. 22
TCU AT TEXAS
Call this the Hangover Bowl, with the Frogs and Horns coming off potentially defining non-conference clashes. Who recovers best?

OCT. 6
OKLAHOMA VS. TEXAS
This tilt hasn't commanded the nation's attention lately, due to the Horns' struggles. Tom Herman hopes to change that … soon.

OCT. 13
WEST VIRGINIA AT IOWA STATE
This could be the year for a sleeper team to rise to the top in the Big 12. And these two boast the league's most proven quarterbacks.

NOV. 10
OKLAHOMA STATE AT OKLAHOMA
Bedlam has consistently become the big game in the conference, typically carrying title implications. And it's always entertaining.

NOV. 24
OKLAHOMA AT WEST VIRGINIA
The Mountaineers face Texas, TCU and Oklahoma State the three previous weeks. If they're still standing, this could be for a title game spot.


PEYTON BENDER, KANSAS

Big 12 Returning Leaders

Passing	ATT	COMP	PCT	YDS	TD	INT	AVG/G
Will Grier, West Virginia	388	250	64.4	3,490	34	12	317.3
Peyton Bender, Kansas	273	148	54.2	1,609	10	10	160.9
Carter Stanley, Kansas	185	101	54.6	1,108	4	7	123.1

Rushing	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Justice Hill, Oklahoma State	268	1,467	5.5	15	79	112.9
David Montgomery, Iowa State	258	1,146	4.4	11	58	88.2
Rodney Anderson, Oklahoma	188	1,161	6.2	13	58	82.9

Receiving	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Denzel Mims, Baylor	61	1,087	17.8	8	71	90.6
Gary Jennings, West Virginia	97	1.096	11.3	1	60	84.3
Marquise Brown, Oklahoma	57	1,095	19.2	7	87	84.2

Tackles: Joe Dineen, Kansas (138); Marcel Spears, Iowa State (107)
Sacks: Ben Banogu, TCU (8.5); Two players tied with 7
Interceptions: A.J. Green, Oklahoma State (4); Justus Parker, Texas Tech (4)

2017 Big 12 Standings

	BIG 12	OVERALL		BIG 12	OVERALL
Oklahoma	8-1	12-2	Kansas State	5-4	8-5
TCU	7-2	11-3	Iowa State	5-4	8-5
Oklahoma State	6-3	10-3	Texas Tech	3-6	6-7
Texas	5-4	7-6	Baylor	1-8	1-11
West Virginia	5-4	7-6	Kansas	0-9	1-11

2017 Bowl Results

Birmingham Bowl: South Florida 38, Texas Tech 34

Heart of Dallas Bowl: Utah 30, West Virginia 14

Cactus Bowl: Kansas State 35, UCLA 17

Texas Bowl: Texas 33, Missouri 16

Camping World Bowl: Oklahoma State 30, Virginia Tech 21

Alamo Bowl: TCU 39, Stanford 37

Liberty Bowl: Iowa State 21, Memphis 20

Rose Bowl (CFP Semifinal): Georgia 54, Oklahoma 48 (2OT)

2017 Big 12 TEAM STATS & RANKINGS

OFFENSE

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
BAYLOR	24.3 (9)	117.3 (8)	287.7 (5)	404.9 (6)
IOWA STATE	29.2 (8)	113.1 (9)	272.9 (6)	386.0 (8)
KANSAS	18.7 (10)	102.6 (10)	226.4 (9)	329.0 (10)
KANSAS STATE	32.3 (6)	198.8 (2)	173.8 (10)	372.5 (9)
OKLAHOMA	45.1 (1)	217.8 (1)	361.8 (2)	579.6 (1)
OKLAHOMA STATE	45.0 (2)	179.8 (3)	389.2 (1)	568.9 (2)
TCU	33.6 (5)	174.1 (4)	245.1 (8)	419.2 (5)
TEXAS	29.5 (7)	139.6 (7)	258.8 (7)	398.5 (7)
TEXAS TECH	34.3 (4)	140.9 (6)	333.7 (3)	474.6 (3)
WEST VIRGINIA	34.5 (3)	150.3 (5)	309.3 (4)	459.6 (4)

DEFENSE

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
BAYLOR	35.9 (9)	189.9 (9)	267.0 (6)	456.9 (9)
IOWA STATE	20.9 (2)	128.0 (4)	238.2 (2)	366.2 (3)
KANSAS	43.4 (10)	171.6 (8)	296.8 (9)	468.3 (!0)
KANSAS STATE	25.2 (4)	117.7 (3)	309.1 (10)	426.8 (6)
OKLAHOMA	27.1 (5)	156.5 (6)	238.4 (3)	394.9 (4)
OKLAHOMA STATE	29.4 (6)	140.7 (5)	268.6 (7)	409.3 (5)
TCU	19.0 (1)	103.9 (1)	227.5 (1)	331.4 (1)
TEXAS	21.2 (3)	106.9 (2)	258.8 (5)	365.6 (2)
TEXAS TECH	32.2 (8)	161.6 (7)	282.2 (8)	443.8 (7)
WEST VIRGINIA	31.5 (7)	204.2 (10)	241.4 (4)	445.5 (8)

ALL-Big 12 TEAM

First-Team Offense

QB	**Will Grier**	6-2	215	Sr.	West Virginia
RB	**Rodney Anderson**	6-1	219	Jr.	Oklahoma
RB	**David Montgomery**	5-11	219	Jr.	Iowa State
AP	**Justice Hill**	5-10	190	Jr.	Oklahoma State
WR	**Marquise Brown**	5-10	160	Jr.	Oklahoma
WR	**Denzel Mims**	6-3	208	Jr.	Baylor
WR	**David Sills**	6-4	204	Sr.	West Virginia
C	**Julian Good-Jones**	6-5	293	Jr.	Iowa State
OL	**Yodny Cajuste**	6-5	318	Sr.	West Virginia
OL	**Bobby Evans**	6-5	299	Jr.	Oklahoma
OL	**Ben Powers**	6-4	314	Sr.	Oklahoma
OL	**Dalton Risner**	6-5	300	Sr.	Kansas State



JAQUAN BAILEY, IOWA STATE



WILL GRIER, WEST VIRGINIA

First-Team Defense

DL	**JaQuan Bailey**	6-2	260	Jr.	Iowa State
DL	**Ben Banogu**	6-4	249	Sr.	TCU
DL	**Breckyn Hager**	6-3	255	Sr.	Texas
DL	**Daniel Wise**	6-3	290	Sr.	Kansas
LB	**Dakota Allen**	6-1	235	Sr.	Texas Tech
LB	**Joe Dineen**	6-2	235	Sr.	Kansas
LB	**David Long**	5-11	221	Jr.	West Virginia
CB	**Kris Boyd**	6-0	195	Sr.	Texas
CB	**Brian Peavy**	5-9	190	Sr.	Iowa State
S	**Kendall Adams**	6-1	228	Sr.	Kansas State
S	**Jah'Shawn Johnson**	5-10	185	Sr.	Texas Tech

First-Team Specialists

K	**Austin Seibert**	5-9	208	Sr.	Oklahoma
P	**Drew Galitz**	5-11	212	Sr.	Baylor
KR	**Marcus Simms**	6-0	193	Jr.	West Virginia
PR	**KaVontae Turpin**	5-9	157	Sr.	TCU

SECOND-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Charlie Brewer**	6-1	202	So.	Baylor
RB	**Alex Barnes**	6-1	227	Jr.	Kansas State
RB	**Kennedy McKoy**	6-0	205	Jr.	West Virginia
AP	**KaVontae Turpin**	5-9	157	Sr.	TCU
WR	**Hakeem Butler**	6-6	219	Jr.	Iowa State
WR	**Gary Jennings**	6-1	214	Sr.	West Virginia
WR	**CeeDee Lamb**	6-2	187	So.	Oklahoma
C	**Adam Holtorf**	6-4	295	Jr.	Kansas State
OL	**Jack Anderson**	6-5	320	So.	Texas Tech
OL	**Scott Frantz**	6-5	297	Jr.	Kansas State
OL	**Marcus Keyes**	6-3	309	Jr.	Oklahoma State
OL	**Colton McKivitz**	6-7	306	Jr.	West Virginia

SECOND-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Jordan Brailford**	6-3	250	Jr.	Oklahoma State
DL	**Trey Dishon**	6-2	305	Jr.	Kansas State
DL	**Eli Howard**	6-4	270	So.	Texas Tech
DL	**Reggie Walker**	6-2	246	Jr.	Kansas State
LB	**Gary Johnson**	6-0	225	Sr.	Texas
LB	**Marcel Spears**	6-1	215	Jr.	Iowa State
LB	**Ty Summers**	6-2	235	Sr.	TCU
CB	**Parnell Motley**	6-0	182	Jr.	Oklahoma
CB	**Duke Shelley**	5-9	180	Sr.	Kansas State
S	**Denzel Goolsby**	5-11	194	Jr.	Kansas State
S	**Justus Parker**	6-0	205	Jr.	Texas Tech

SECOND-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Gabriel Rui**	5-11	205	Sr.	Kansas
P	**Austin Seibert**	5-9	208	Sr.	Oklahoma
KR	**KaVontae Turpin**	5-9	157	Sr.	TCU
PR	**CeeDee Lamb**	6-2	187	So.	Oklahoma



Alex Barnes
Kansas State



Ty Summers
TCU



Justin Phillips
Oklahoma State



CeeDee Lamb
Oklahoma

THIRD-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Kyle Kempt**	6-5	210	Sr.	Iowa State
RB	**Darius Anderson**	5-11	204	Jr.	TCU
RB	**Khalil Herbert**	5-9	210	Jr.	Kansas
AP	**JaMycal Hasty**	5-8	206	Jr.	Baylor
WR	**Collin Johnson**	6-6	215	Jr.	Texas
WR	**Jalen McCleskey**	5-10	170	Sr.	Oklahoma State
WR	**T.J. Vasher**	6-6	190	So.	Texas Tech
C	**Zach Shackelford**	6-4	305	Jr.	Texas
OL	**Hakeem Adeniji**	6-4	300	Jr.	Kansas
OL	**Calvin Anderson**	6-5	300	Sr.	Texas
OL	**Dru Samia**	6-5	297	Sr.	Oklahoma
OL	**Patrick Vahe**	6-3	325	Sr.	Texas

THIRD-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Ira Lewis**	6-3	295	Sr.	Baylor
DL	**Ray Lima**	6-3	306	Jr.	Iowa State
DL	**Charles Omenihu**	6-6	275	Sr.	Texas
DL	**Ezekiel Rose**	6-2	275	Sr.	West Virginia
LB	**Willie Harvey**	6-0	222	Sr.	Iowa State
LB	**Caleb Kelly**	6-3	233	Jr.	Oklahoma
LB	**Justin Phillips**	6-0	230	Sr.	Oklahoma State
CB	**Grayland Arnold**	5-9	190	Jr.	Baylor
CB	**A.J. Green**	6-1	182	Jr.	Oklahoma State
S	**Dravon Askew-Henry**	6-0	200	Sr.	West Virginia
S	**Niko Small**	5-10	183	Sr.	TCU

THIRD-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Connor Martin**	5-9	189	Jr.	Baylor
P	**Billy Kinney**	6-4	218	Sr.	West Virginia
KR	**Steven Sims**	5-10	176	Sr.	Kansas
PR	**Dillon Stoner**	6-0	198	So.	Oklahoma State

Bender, Barnes: Tim Umphrey; Grier, Phillips: Bruce Schwartzman; Bailey, Summers: Tom Lynn; Lamb: Layne Murdoch

Baylor **Bears**

National Forecast: **53** • Big 12 Prediction: **8** • Projected Record: **6-6, 3-6 Big 12**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Abilene Christian
Sept.	8	at UTSA
Sept.	15	Duke
Sept.	22	Kansas
Sept.	29	at Oklahoma
Oct.	6	Kansas State
Oct.	13	at Texas
Oct.	25	at West Virginia
Nov.	3	Oklahoma State
Nov.	10	at Iowa State
Nov.	17	TCU
Nov.	24	vs. Texas Tech #

#Arlington, TX

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 1-11, 1-8 BIG 12

Sept.	2	Liberty	L	45-48
Sept.	9	UTSA	L	10-17
Sept.	16	at Duke	L	20-34
Sept.	23	Oklahoma	L	41-49
Sept.	30	at Kansas State	L	20-33
Oct.	14	at Oklahoma State	L	16-59
Oct.	21	West Virginia	L	36-38
Oct.	28	Texas	L	7-38
Nov.	4	at Kansas	W	38-9
Nov.	11	vs. Texas Tech #	L	24-38
Nov.	18	Iowa State	L	13-23
Nov.	24	at TCU	L	22-45

#Arlington

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Gerry Bohanon, QB, Earle, AR
2. Byron Hanspard Jr., CB, DeSoto, TX
3. Joshua Fleeks, WR, Dallas, TX
4. Tyquan Thornton, WR, Miami, FL
5. Craig Williams, RB, Crosby, TX
6. Connor Galvin, OT, Katy, TX
7. Kalon Barnes, WR, Silsbee, TX
8. Josh Landry, DT, Houston, TX
9. Johncarlo Valentin, OG, Philadelphia, PA*
10. Christian Morgan, S, Houston, TX

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG 12	NATIONAL
Scoring	24.3 ppg	9	98
Rushing	117.3 ypg	8	115
Passing	287.7 ypg	5	24
Total	404.9 ypg	6	59
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	35.9 ppg	9	114
Rushing	189.9 ypg	9	92
Passing	267.0 ypg	6	115
Total	456.9 ypg	9	112
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
-14	-1.17	9	124

STAT CORNER

28

In 2017's final two-deep, Baylor listed 28 freshmen and sophomores and seven seniors among 44 offensive and defensive players.

OFFENSE In the revolving door that is the Baylor quarterback position, sophomore Charlie Brewer is the next man up after getting four starts under his belt during last year's 1–11 disaster. The sixth different starter at the position since Bryce Petty led the Bears to back-to-back Big 12 championships in 2013-14, Brewer passed for 1,562 yards and 11 TDs and earned Big 12 Co-Offensive Freshman of the Year honors.

"There's nothing better than actually being out there and playing and playing against Big 12 competition," co-offensive coordinator Jeff Nixon says. "We feel Charlie got his feet with four-and-a-half games and knows our system now."

The only other scholarship quarterback in the spring was early enrollee freshman Gerry Bohanon from tiny Earle, Ark. Jalan McClendon, a grad transfer from NC State, is set to join the team in the summer.

Denzel Mims emerged as the Bears' go-to guy last season after Chris Platt suffered a torn ACL, hauling in 61 passes for 1,087 yards and eight touchdowns. Like Platt, Gavin Holmes, R.J. Sneed and Pooh Stricklin are also coming back from injuries and should be full-go in the fall. Added to that mix are freshman Tyquan Thornton and Tennessee transfer Jalen Hurd, a converted running back who rushed for 2,638 yards in three seasons.

Nixon sees a running back-by-committee approach with junior JaMycal Hasty and sophomores John Lovett and Trestan Ebner, a trio that rushed for 880 yards and eight TDs last season. But if Hasty stays healthy, "you'll see a big difference in the run game."

That also goes for an offensive line that added Clemson transfer Jake Fruhmorgen to a group that includes converted tight end Sam Tecklenburg at center, Blake Blackmar and Xavier Newman at the guards and Pat Lawrence at tackle.

DEFENSE Now that Baylor has gone through Phil Snow's Defense 101, the Bears should be able to play faster and second-guess fewer things going into head coach Matt Rhule's second season. "We've done this a bunch of different times where we're not very good and then the next year we're the best in the conference," says Snow. "Guys just don't play as fast [that first year]. At the end of the year, I thought we started to play better."

Safety was an albatross, but there's an upgrade with senior Verkedric Vaughns and juniors Chris Miller and Blake Lynch, who's made the rounds at receiver, Wildcat quarterback and cornerback. There's also depth at corner with Grayland Arnold, Jameson Houston, Harrison Hand and Temple transfer Derrek Thomas.

Texas A&M transfer James Lockhart is a big addition to a front four that returns Ira Lewis, Bravvion Roy, Tyrone Hunt and Micheal Johnson at the interior positions and Greg Roberts, Xavier Jones, B.J. Thompson and Deonte Williams at end. Injuries took their toll at linebacker in the spring with redshirt freshman Terrel Bernard and potential starters Clay Johnston and Lenoy Jones Jr. all out.

SPECIALISTS Before suffering an ACL injury in the fifth game, Drew Galitz (45.2-yard average) was a legitimate Ray Guy Award candidate. His return takes something off the plate of Connor Martin, who was 20-of-24 on field goals.

FINAL ANALYSIS Playing with a chip on their shoulder after last year's 1–11 finish, the Bears should be able to get off to a better start and make a run at their eighth bowl bid in nine years. But staying healthy will be the key.



CHARLIE BREWER

"I thought Charlie Brewer played really well last year. He can make the throws to win games ... but they've got to get better play on the offensive line."

— An opposing Big 12 assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	15	**Denzel Mims (Jr.)**	17	Pooh Stricklin (Jr.)
WR	84	Jalen Hurd (Sr.)	**13**	**Tony Nicholson (Jr.)**
WR	14	Chris Platt (Sr.)	19	R.J. Sneed (So.)
LT	63	Jake Fruhmorgen (Jr.)	75	Eleasah Anderson (Fr.)
LG	**55**	**Xavier Newman (So.)**	78	Henry Klinge III (Fr.)
C	**52**	**Sam Tecklenburg (Jr.)**	64	Ryan Miller (So.)
RG	**72**	**Blake Blackmar (Sr.)**	65	Christian Beard (Sr.)
RT	**77**	**Patrick Lawrence (Sr.)**	69	Josh Malin (Sr.)
TE	86	Jamie Jacobs (Sr.)	82	Tyler Henderson (Fr.)
QB	12	Charlie Brewer (So.)		Jalan McClendon (Sr.)
RB	33	JaMycal Hasty (Jr.)	7	John Lovett (So.)

DEFENSE (5)

DE	52	Greg Roberts (Sr.)	55	James Lockhart (Jr.)
NT	**9**	**Ira Lewis (Sr.)**	93	James Lynch (So.)
DT	90	Tyrone Hunt (Jr.)	99	Bravvion Roy (Jr.)
DE	94	Xavier Jones (Sr.)	40	Deonte Williams (So.)
WLB	38	Jordan Williams (Jr.)	26	Terrel Bernard (Fr.)
MLB	**44**	**Clay Johnston (Jr.)**	33	Demarco Artis (So.)
SLB	**24**	**Jalen Pitre (So.)**	28	Henry Black (Jr.)
CB	**4**	**Grayland Arnold (Jr.)**	23	Derrek Thomas (Sr.)
CB	**31**	**Harrison Hand (So.)**	11	Jameson Houston (Jr.)
FS	21	Blake Lynch (Jr.)	27	Verkedric Vaughns (Sr.)
SS	3	Chris Miller (Jr.)	29	Christian Morgan (Fr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	96	Connor Martin (Jr.)	KR	13	Tony Nicholson (Jr.)
P	36	Drew Galitz (Sr.)	PR	6	Trevor White (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Charlie Brewer, 204-139-1,562-4, 11 TDs
Rushing: John Lovett, 98 att., 445 yds., 5 TDs
Receiving: Denzel Mims, 61 rec., 1,087 yds., 8 TDs
Tackles: Clay Johnston, 54
Sacks: Ira Lewis, 5.5
Interceptions: Three players tied with 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Matt Rhule
Record at School: 1-11 (1 year)
Career Record: 29-34 (5 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Jeff Nixon, Glenn Thomas
Defensive Coordinator: Phil Snow
Waco, TX • McLane Stadium (45,140)

AP

Iowa State **Cyclones**

National Forecast: **36** • Big 12 Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **7-5, 5-4 Big 12**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	South Dakota State
Sept.	8	at Iowa
Sept.	15	Oklahoma
Sept.	22	Akron
Sept.	29	at TCU
Oct.	6	at Oklahoma State
Oct.	13	West Virginia
Oct.	27	Texas Tech
Nov.	3	at Kansas
Nov.	10	Baylor
Nov.	17	at Texas
Nov.	24	Kansas State

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 5-4 BIG 12

Sept.	2	Northern Iowa	W	42-24
Sept.	9	Iowa	(ot) L	41-44
Sept.	16	at Akron	W	41-14
Sept.	28	Texas	L	7-17
Oct.	7	at Oklahoma	W	38-31
Oct.	14	Kansas	W	45-0
Oct.	21	at Texas Tech	W	31-13
Oct.	28	TCU	W	14-7
Nov.	4	at West Virginia	L	16-20
Nov.	11	Oklahoma State	L	42-49
Nov.	18	at Baylor	W	23-13
Nov.	25	at Kansas State	L	19-20
Dec.	30	vs. Memphis #	W	21-20

#Liberty Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Joseph Scates, WR, Dayton, OH
2. Sean Shaw Jr., WR, Jones, OK
3. Joey Ramos, OT, Phoenix, AZ
4. Trevor Downing, OG, Creston, IA
5. Will McDonald, DE, Pewaukee, WI
6. Jaeveyon Morton, CB, Detroit, MI
7. Brock Purdy, QB, Gilbert, AZ
8. Greg Eisworth, S, Grand Prairie, TX*
9. Mike Rose, OLB, Brecksville, OH
10. Isaiah Lee, DT, Chicago, IL

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG 12	NATIONAL
Scoring	29.2 ppg	8	56
Rushing	113.1 ypg	9	117
Passing	272.9 ypg	6	30
Total	386.0 ypg	8	86
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	20.9 ppg	2	26
Rushing	128.0 ypg	4	23
Passing	238.2 ypg	2	86
Total	366.2 ypg	3	43
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
+10	+0.77	2	16

STAT CORNER

-1.6

Based on fumble recovery and interception rates, ISU's expected turnover margin was minus-1.6. Actual turnover margin: plus-10.

OFFENSE Replacing Allen Lazard at wide receiver isn't easy, but Iowa State's offense seems to be very capable of moving forward and even improving in 2018. The Cyclones caught a break from the NCAA this offseason when quarterback Kyle Kempt was gifted a sixth year. Kempt competed 66 percent of his passes in 2017 and threw 15 touchdowns to only three interceptions. Kempt's arm strength is questionable, but he's one of the smartest players in the Big 12 and will manage the offense the way coach Matt Campbell wants.

He's got a great guy to hand the football off to in David Montgomery. The junior ran for 1,146 yards last season, good for third in the Big 12. Iowa State gets a boost from the return of sophomore running back Kene Nwangwu, who missed last season with a torn Achilles.

The key is what happens up front. Guards Julian Good-Jones and Josh Knipfel and tackle Bryce Meeker are nice pieces, but an army of young players needs to step up to allow Montgomery's talents to truly shine. "The greatest challenge to this football team is, can this offensive line grow?" Campbell says. "I think it will allow our running backs to grow."

The wide receivers are big and talented, led by 6'6" junior Hakeem Butler. Matt Eaton, a 6'4" senior, will start on the other side. Junior Deshaunte Jones is a playmaking threat on the inside. Sophomore tight end Chase Allen was named second-team All-Big 12 a year ago and put on 25 pounds in the offseason.

DEFENSE Nobody saw the defensive turnaround coming. Two years ago, Iowa State finished 86th in scoring defense at 31.3 points per game. Last year, the Cyclones improved to 26th at 20.9 points per game, the second-best mark in the Big 12.

It started with Ray Lima, who will return as a junior at nose tackle. He was so good in 2017 that it allowed Iowa State to make a switch to a 3-4 set, which turned the season around. JaQuan Bailey, a junior, was fifth in the Big 12 in sacks with seven. Iowa State's defensive line might be its deepest position group in 2018 as Kamilo Tongamoa, Jamahl Johnson and Matt Leo should all take steps forward.

Junior linebacker Marcel Spears returns after finishing sixth in the Big 12 in tackles. Senior Willie Harvey is one of the most experienced players on the team. Youngsters Tymar Sutton, O'Rien Vance and Jake Hummel must replace Joel Lanning in the middle.

Senior cornerbacks Brian Peavy and D'Andre Payne bring 54 combined starts. Peavy is Iowa State's active career leader in tackles, interceptions and starts. Lawrence White started Iowa State's Liberty Bowl victory over Memphis and will get the nod at free safety.

SPECIALISTS Iowa State has to replace its placekicker and punter from a year ago. Brayden Narveson, a freshman, was one of the top prep kickers in the country. Corey Dunn was ranked as one of the top junior college punters in the country. Both were on campus in the spring.

FINAL ANALYSIS Campbell was a year ahead of schedule in getting Iowa State back to a bowl game. The program seems poised to maintain its momentum. The Cyclones should be better in the trenches on both sides of the football, and across the board, this is a deeper and more athletic team than the one that went 8–5 a year ago. Another trip to the postseason seems likely in Ames, and finishing in the upper half of the Big 12 is possible.



DAVID MONTGOMERY

"First time I met Matt Campbell I was blown away. He's just such a sharp guy, he gets it. I say this knowing I have to coach against him every season."

— An opposing Big 12 assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	8	Deshaunte Jones (Jr.)	14	Tarique Milton (Fr.)
WR	23	Matthew Eaton (Sr.)	83	Jalen Martin (So.)
WR	18	**Hakeem Butler (Jr.)**	80	Carson Epps (Sr.)
LT	75	Sean Foster (So.)	72	Jacob Bolton (Fr.)
LG	51	**Julian Good-Jones (Jr.)**	77	Robert Hudson (Fr.)
C	57	Colin Newell (Fr.)	51	Julian Good-Jones (Jr.)
RG	66	**Josh Knipfel (Jr.)**	54	Josh Mueller (So.)
RT	74	**Bryce Meeker (Jr.)**	72	Jacob Bolton (Fr.)
TE	11	**Chase Allen (So.)**	89	Dylan Soehner (So.)
QB	17	**Kyle Kempt (Sr.)**	4	Zeb Noland (So.)
RB	32	**David Montgomery (Jr.)**	3	Kene Nwangwu (So.)

DEFENSE (6)

DE	50	Eyioma Uwazurike (So.)	89	Matt Leo (Jr.)
NG	76	**Ray Lima (Jr.)**	92	Jamahl Johnson (Jr.)
DT	48	Kamilo Tongamoa (Sr.)	97	Angel Dominguez (Fr.)
LEO	19	**JaQuan Bailey (Jr.)**	46	Spencer Benton (Sr.)
OLB	42	**Marcel Spears (Jr.)**	9	Reggan Northrup (Sr.)
MLB	43	Tymar Sutton (So.)	34	O'Rien Vance (Fr.)
OLB	2	**Willie Harvey (Sr.)**	9	Reggan Northrup (Sr.)
CB	1	**D'Andre Payne (Sr.)**	32	Arnold Azunna (So.)
CB	10	**Brian Peavy (Sr.)**	6	De'Monte Ruth (Sr.)
FS	11	Lawrence White (So.)	16	Keontae Jones (Fr.)
SS	12	Greg Eisworth (Jr.)	33	Braxton Lewis (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	90	Brayden Narveson (Fr.)	KR	3	Kene Nwangwu (So.)
P	13	Corey Dunn (So.)	PR	8	Deshaunte Jones (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Kyle Kempt, 243-161-1,787-3, 15 TDs
Rushing: David Montgomery, 258 att., 1,146 yds., 11 TDs
Receiving: Hakeem Butler, 41 rec., 697 yds., 7 TDs
Tackles: Marcel Spears Jr., 107
Sacks: JaQuan Bailey, 7.0
Interceptions: Brian Peavy, Marcel Spears Jr., 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Matt Campbell
Record at School: 11-14 (2 years)
Career Record: 46-29 (6+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Matt Campbell
Defensive Coordinator: Jon Heacock
Ames, IA • Jack Trice Stadium (61,500)

Bruce Schwartzman

Kansas **Jayhawks**

National Forecast: **116** • Big 12 Prediction: **10** • Projected Record: **2-10, 0-9 Big 12**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Nicholls State
Sept.	8	at Central Michigan
Sept.	15	Rutgers
Sept.	22	at Baylor
Sept.	29	Oklahoma State
Oct.	6	at West Virginia
Oct.	20	at Texas Tech
Oct.	27	TCU
Nov.	3	Iowa State
Nov.	10	at Kansas State
Nov.	17	at Oklahoma
Nov.	23	Texas

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 1-11, 0-9 BIG 12

Sept.	2	SE Missouri State	W	38-16
Sept.	9	Central Michigan	L	27-45
Sept.	16	at Ohio	L	30-42
Sept.	23	West Virginia	L	34-56
Oct.	7	Texas Tech	L	19-65
Oct.	14	at Iowa State	L	0-45
Oct.	21	at TCU	L	0-43
Oct.	28	Kansas State	L	20-30
Nov.	4	Baylor	L	9-38
Nov.	11	at Texas	L	27-42
Nov.	18	Oklahoma	L	3-41
Nov.	25	at Oklahoma State	L	17-58

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Pooka Williams, RB, Boutte, LA
2. Corione Harris, CB, Marrero, LA
3. Najee Stevens-McKenzie, DE, Cleveland, OH*
4. Azur Kamara, DE, Glendale, AZ*
5. Nick Williams, OT, Saint Louis, MO
6. Stephon Robinson, WR, Los Angeles, CA*
7. Jacobi Lott, OG, Amarillo, TX
8. Elijah Jones, CB, Cape Coral, FL*
9. Elmore Hempstead, CB, Smackover, AR*
10. Jeremiah McCullough, S, Baltimore, MD*

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG 12	NATIONAL
Scoring	18.7 ppg	10	120
Rushing	102.6 ypg	10	125
Passing	226.4 ypg	9	68
Total	329.0 ypg	10	118
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	43.4 ppg	10	129
Rushing	171.6 ypg	8	73
Passing	296.8 ypg	9	126
Total	468.3 ypg	10	118
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
-17	-1.42	10	128

STAT CORNER

-9.2

Kansas' field position margin of minus-9.2 yards per possession was the worst in FBS, 2.5 yards behind the second-worst team.

OFFENSE For the fourth consecutive year under Kansas coach David Beaty, the Jayhawks will enter fall camp unsettled at quarterback. Former junior college transfer Peyton Bender returns after an inconsistent first season with KU, and he was replaced late by the more mobile Carter Stanley, who didn't perform any better. The 5'10" Miles Kendrick will enter the mix after leading College of San Mateo to the California state championship game last season.

With better health, KU's running backs have the potential to be the team's best position group. Khalil Herbert is the team's top returner, posting a 291-yard rushing game against West Virginia before a hamstring injury slowed him the rest of the way. Sophomore Dom Williams was in a similar position in 2017, grinding through nagging ailments that limited his production. True freshman Pooka Williams also should compete for carries immediately after picking KU over late offers from LSU and Nebraska.

At receiver, Steven Sims is the team's top returning playmaker after earning the Jayhawks' highest offensive grade from Pro Football Focus in 2017. The Houston speedster's 59 catches were nearly double that of any other teammate (30), while his 839 receiving yards and six touchdowns were easily team bests.

The Jayhawks face huge concerns on the offensive line. That starts with replacing center Mesa Ribordy, who retired from football in the offseason, and part-time starters Zach Hannon and Jayson Rhodes. Left tackle Hakeem Adeniji is the standout, though he's returning from two offseason shoulder surgeries.

DEFENSE One of KU's biggest offseason wins came when talented defensive lineman Daniel Wise announced he was returning for a senior season. The coaches' All-Big 12 first-team selection should anchor a defensive front that will have plenty of newcomers.

The Jayhawks have experience at linebacker. That begins with senior Joe Dineen Jr., who earned some All-America recognition after he led the nation in solo tackles per game (7.6) in 2017.

KU's coaching staff loaded up on secondary players in recruiting while hoping to improve the team's speed and athleticism. The Jayhawks' top signee — true freshman cornerback Corione Harris — is the most intriguing, and he should have a chance to play right away after ranking as a top-300 recruit nationally.

SPECIALISTS KU received a boost at the end of 2017 when it learned that placekicker Gabriel Rui would be granted an extra year of eligibility; he made 17-of-20 field goals last season to give the Jayhawks stability at a position that had previously been subpar.

FINAL ANALYSIS If one wants to take the most optimistic view of KU's upcoming season, it starts with this: The Jayhawks, according to Bill Connelly's research at SB Nation, return a combined 91 percent of their offensive and defensive production from last season — the second-highest mark nationally behind only Michigan State. Though that usually portends good things, there's a lot of ground for KU to make up.

KU finished just 1–11 in 2017, with its only win coming in the season opener against FCS opponent Southeast Missouri State. Beaty's record stands at 3-33 in three seasons, with his only FBS win coming against Texas in 2016.

The stakes will be high in 2018. If KU struggles to start the season, the moves could come in a hurry, whether that's a change in athletic director or a change in head coach.



KHALIL HERBERT

Tim Umphrey

"That team wasn't even close to winning a conference game, weren't even competitive for the most part. That's what's scary."

— An opposing Big 12 assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	11	**Steven Sims (Sr.)**	6	Quan Hampton (So.)
WR	2	Daylon Charlot (Jr.)	19	Evan Fairs (Jr.)
WR	88	**Jeremiah Booker (Sr.)**	14	Kerr Johnson (Sr.)
LT	78	**Hakeem Adeniji (Jr.)**	74	Clyde McCauley (Jr.)
LG	61	Malik Clark (So.)	55	Jacob Bragg (Sr.)
C	77	**Andru Tovi (Jr.)**	79	Joseph Gilbertson (Fr.)
RG	76	**Chris Hughes (So.)**	73	Larry Hughes (Sr.)
RT	75	Antione Frazier (Jr.)	71	Cam Durley (So.)
TE	89	Mavin Saunders (Sr.)	13	Kenyon Tabor (Fr.)
QB	7	**Peyton Bender (Sr.)**	8	Miles Kendrick (So.)
RB	10	Khalil Herbert (Jr.)	25	Dom Williams (So.)

DEFENSE (9)

DE	99	Foster Dixson (Jr.)	44	Willie McCaleb (Jr.)
DT	88	**J.J. Holmes (Sr.)**	6	Isi Holani (Sr.)
DT	96	**Daniel Wise (Sr.)**	94	Codey Cole (Jr.)
DE	9	Najee Stevens-McKenzie (Jr.)		Azur Kamara (Jr.)
LB	31	Osaze Ogbebor (Sr.)	9	Kyron Johnson (So.)
LB	29	**Joe Dineen Jr. (Sr.)**	47	**Keith Loneker (Sr.)**
NB	1	**Bryce Torneden (Jr.)**	28	Robert Topps (Fr.)
CB	2	Corione Harris (Fr.)		Elijah Jones (Jr.)
CB	13	**Hasan Defense (Jr.)**	8	**Shakial Taylor (Sr.)**
FS	12	Jeremiah McCullough (Jr.)	22	**Tyrone Miller (Sr.)**
SS	11	**Mike Lee (Jr.)**	19	Davon Ferguson (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	39	Gabriel Rui (Sr.)	KR		Pooka Williams (Fr.)
P	38	Kyle Thompson (So.)	PR	2	Daylon Charlot (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Peyton Bender, 273-148-1,609-10, 10 TDs
Rushing: Khalil Herbert, 120 att., 663 yds., 4 TDs
Receiving: Steven Sims Jr., 59 rec., 839 yds., 6 TDs
Tackles: Joe Dineen Jr., 137
Sacks: Daniel Wise, 7.0
Interceptions: Mike Lee, 2; Hasan Defense, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: David Beaty
Record at School: 3-33 (3 years)
Career Record: 3-33 (3 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Doug Meacham
Defensive Coordinator: Clint Bowen
Lawrence, KS • Memorial Stadium (50,071)

Kansas State **Wildcats**

National Forecast: **41** • Big 12 Prediction: **7** • Projected Record: **6-6, 4-5 Big 12**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	South Dakota
Sept.	8	Mississippi State
Sept.	15	UTSA
Sept.	22	at West Virginia
Sept.	29	Texas
Oct.	6	at Baylor
Oct.	13	Oklahoma State
Oct.	27	at Oklahoma
Nov.	3	at TCU
Nov.	10	Kansas
Nov.	17	Texas Tech
Nov.	24	at Iowa State

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 5-4 BIG 12

Sept.	2	Central Arkansas		W	55-19
Sept.	9	Charlotte		W	55-7
Sept.	16	at Vanderbilt		L	7-14
Sept.	30	Baylor		W	33-20
Oct.	7	at Texas	(ot)	L	34-40
Oct.	14	TCU		L	6-26
Oct.	21	Oklahoma		L	35-42
Oct.	28	at Kansas		W	30-20
Nov.	4	at Texas Tech	(ot)	W	42-35
Nov.	11	West Virginia		L	23-28
Nov.	18	at Oklahoma State		W	45-40
Nov.	25	Iowa State		W	20-19
Dec.	26	vs. UCLA #		W	35-17

#Cactus Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. John Holcombe II, QB, Humble, TX
2. Lance Robinson, S, New Orleans, LA
3. Wayne Jones, S, Owasso, OK
4. Luke Sowa, FB, Millstone Township, KS
5. EJ Turner, WR, Cartersville, GA
6. Rahsaan York, OLB, Sacramento, CA*
7. Christian Duffie, OG, Humble, TX
8. Kaitori Leveston, OT, Waco, TX
9. Spencer Trussell, DE, Arlington, TX
10. Jaquay Lane, WR, Loganville, GA

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG 12	NATIONAL
Scoring	32.3 ppg	6	39
Rushing	198.8 ypg	2	32
Passing	173.8 ypg	10	108
Total	372.5 ypg	9	95
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	25.2 ppg	4	50
Rushing	117.7 ypg	3	13
Passing	309.1 ypg	10	129
Total	426.8 ypg	6	91
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
+10	+0.77	2	16

STAT CORNER

30.1

K-State snapped the ball every 30.1 seconds, the sixth-slowest tempo in the country and by far the slowest tempo in the Big 12.

OFFENSE Alex Delton and Skylar Thompson both seem ready to start for the Wildcats, but only one of them can do so come September. Thompson, a sophomore, looked like K-State's quarterback of the future while completing 51-of-83 passes for 689 yards and five touchdowns last season. But then Delton, a junior, rushed for 158 yards and three touchdowns in a Cactus Bowl victory over UCLA. New offensive coordinator Andre Coleman will likely wait until the end of summer practices to choose a starter.

The Wildcats won't lack backfield talent or depth this season. Alex Barnes, Justin Silmon and Dalvin Warmack are all back, and Mike McCoy seems ready to contribute. Barnes, a junior, returns as the lead back after rushing for 819 yards and seven touchdowns last season. He seems poised to top 1,000 yards this season.

Receiver could be a different story. Without Byron Pringle and Dominique Heath, it's unclear who exactly will be on the field for passing plays this season. Isaiah Zuber returns after catching 51 passes for 510 yards and four touchdowns. Dalton Schoen is also back coming off a 470-yard, three-touchdown season. They each should see larger roles. But K-State returns little else at the position. Former backups Isaiah Harris and Zach Reuter figure to get first crack at playing time.

Offensive line will be a strength. The Wildcats return all five starters up front. The best of the group is Dalton Risner, a senior who should be one of the best blockers in the Big 12, if not the country.

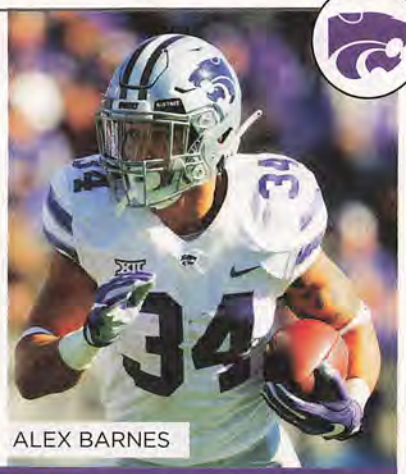
DEFENSE The Wildcats will look much different at linebacker. Trent Tanking and Jayd Kirby, the leading tacklers on last year's team, have both moved on. That means K-State is about to get a lot younger, and possibly more athletic, in the middle of its defense. The main candidates to start are Elijah Sullivan, Da'Quan Patton and Justin Hughes. Sullivan seems poised to take on the lead role after making 28 tackles and playing as the No. 3 linebacker last season.

Up front, K-State must try to replace defensive tackle Will Geary, the team's best run stopper and pass rusher last year. That's a lot to replace. The Wildcats will turn to Trey Dishon to lead in the middle with Drew Wiley, Eli Huggins, Joe Davies and Texas State transfer Jordan Mittie to help. Reggie Walker is back at end along with Bronson Massie and Kyle Ball.

In the secondary, Duke Shelley, Kendall Adams and Denzel Goolsby all return. But D.J. Reed, by far the team's top defensive back, left early for the NFL. That will put extra pressure on Shelley at cornerback and Adams and Goolsby at safety. It will be fascinating to see how new coordinator Blake Seiler adjusts.

SPECIALISTS K-State will need a complete overhaul on special teams without Matthew McCrane (placekicker), Nick Walsh (punter), Byron Pringle (kick returner) and Reed (punt returner). Look for Warmack to be involved at the return slots, but competition will be wide open.

FINAL ANALYSIS K-State coach Bill Snyder has enough returning talent and experience to remain a factor in the Big 12, but it won't be easy with two new coordinators and uncertainty at key positions. The Wildcats started slow in each of the past two seasons before finishing strong and winning bowl games. They will need to play well from the get-go, especially with Mississippi State on the schedule, to reach higher levels this season.



ALEX BARNES

"The big difference between now and when K-State was playing for conference titles and in the national title hunt is the defense."

— An opposing Big 12 assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	**7**	**Isaiah Zuber (Jr.)**	13	Chabastin Taylor (Fr.)
WR	83	Dalton Schoen (Jr.)	6	D.J. Render (So.)
WR	15	Zach Reuter (Sr.)	2	Isaiah Harris (So.)
LT	**74**	**Scott Frantz (Jr.)**	68	Bill Kuduk (Fr.)
LG	**61**	**Abdul Beecham (Sr.)**	72	Evan Curl (Jr.)
C	**79**	**Adam Holtorf (Jr.)**	75	Dylan Couch (So.)
RG	**62**	**Tyler Mitchell (Jr.)**	76	Josh Rivas (Fr.)
RT	**71**	**Dalton Risner (Sr.)**	77	Nick Kaltmayer (Jr.)
TE	89	Blaise Gammon (Jr.)	86	Trace Kochevar (Fr.)
QB	10	Skylar Thompson (So.)	5	Alex Delton (Jr.)
RB	**34**	**Alex Barnes (Jr.)**	32	Justin Silmon (Sr.)

DEFENSE (5)

DE	**51**	**Reggie Walker (Jr.)**	44	Kyle Ball (Jr.)
DT	59	Drew Wiley (So.)		Jordan Mittie (Jr.)
DT	**99**	**Trey Dishon (Jr.)**	92	Eli Huggins (Fr.)
DE	90	Bronson Massie (So.)	81	Wyatt Hubert (Fr.)
LB	3	Elijah Sullivan (Jr.)	10	Eric Gallon (Jr.)
LB	5	Da'Quan Patton (Jr.)	13	Chase Johnston (Jr.)
LB	32	Justin Hughes (Jr.)	41	Sam Sizelove (Sr.)
CB	**8**	**Duke Shelley (Sr.)**	18	Darreyl Patterson (Jr.)
CB	6	Johnathan Durham (Jr.)	12	A.J. Parker (So.)
SS	**20**	**Denzel Goolsby (Jr.)**	15	Walter Neil (So.)
FS	**21**	**Kendall Adams (Sr.)**	7	Eli Walker (Sr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	22	Nick McLellan (Jr.)	**KR**	3	Dalvin Warmack (Sr.)
P	21	Devin Anctil (Jr.)	**PR**	2	Isaiah Harris (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Skylar Thompson, 83-51-689-3, 5 TDs
Rushing: Alex Barnes, 146 att., 819 yds., 7 TDs
Receiving: Isaiah Zuber, 51 rec., 510 yds., 4 TDs
Tackles: Denzel Goolsby, 78
Sacks: Kyle Ball, 2.5
Interceptions: Kendall Adams, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Bill Snyder
Record at School: 210-110-1 (26 years)
Career Record: 210-110-1 (26 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Andre Coleman
Defensive Coordinators: Brian Norwood, Blake Seiler
Manhattan, KS • Bill Snyder Family Stadium (50,000)

Tim Umphrey

Oklahoma Sooners

National Forecast: **10** • Big 12 Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **11-2, 7-2 Big 12**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Florida Atlantic
Sept.	8	UCLA
Sept.	15	at Iowa State
Sept.	22	Army
Sept.	29	Baylor
Oct.	6	vs. Texas #
Oct.	20	at TCU
Oct.	27	Kansas State
Nov.	3	at Texas Tech
Nov.	10	Oklahoma State
Nov.	17	Kansas
Nov.	23	at West Virginia

#Dallas

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 12-2, 8-1 BIG 12

Sept.	2	UTEP	W	56-7
Sept.	9	at Ohio State	W	31-16
Sept.	16	Tulane	W	56-14
Sept.	23	at Baylor	W	49-41
Oct.	7	Iowa State	L	31-38
Oct.	14	vs. Texas #	W	29-24
Oct.	21	at Kansas State	W	42-35
Oct.	28	Texas Tech	W	49-27
Nov.	4	at Oklahoma State	W	62-52
Nov.	11	TCU	W	38-20
Nov.	18	at Kansas	W	41-3
Nov.	25	West Virginia	W	59-31
Dec.	2	vs. TCU %	W	41-17
Jan.	1	vs. Georgia &	(ot) L	48-54

#Dallas %Arlington &Rose Bowl: CFP Semifinal

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Brey Walker, OT, Moore, OK
2. Brendan Radley-Hiles, CB, Inglewood, CA
3. Ronnie Perkins, DE, Saint Louis, MO
4. Michael Thompson, DT, Saint Louis, MO
5. T.J. Pledger, RB, Pacoima, CA
6. Ron Tatum, DE, Oklahoma City, OK
7. Jalen Redmond, DE, Midwest City, OK
8. Jaquayln Crawford, ATH, Rockdale, TX
9. DaShaun White, OLB, North Richland Hills, TX
10. Nikolas Bonitto, OLB, Fort Lauderdale, FL

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG 12	NATIONAL
Scoring	45.1 ppg	1	3
Rushing	217.8 ypg	1	27
Passing	361.8 ypg	2	3
Total	579.6 ypg	1	1
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	27.1 ppg	5	68
Rushing	156.5 ypg	6	54
Passing	238.4 ypg	3	87
Total	394.9 ypg	4	67
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
+5	+0.36	5	34

STAT CORNER

45.9

Oklahoma gained 5.0 or more yards on 45.9% of its non-sack carries, third in FBS. Rodney Anderson's 2017 average: 46.8%.

OFFENSE A devastating, double-overtime loss to Georgia in a College Football Playoff semifinal only began the painful blows for Oklahoma. In the aftermath, the Sooners came to grips with losing Baker Mayfield, their Heisman Trophy winner and unabashed face of the program, leaving a gaping void at quarterback. Left tackle Orlando Brown and tight end Mark Andrews, both unanimous All-Americans, were gone, too.

So the offense has some retooling to do, beginning at quarterback, where a spring battle solved little, with neither Kyler Murray nor Austin Kendall creating any separation, sending the competition into the fall.

Murray, a former starter at Texas A&M, was considered the frontrunner for the job after serving as Mayfield's backup last season. And he played well in the spring. But Kendall, a former four-star recruit from North Carolina, did too.

The other skill positions feature plenty of playmakers. Rodney Anderson didn't start until the eighth game of 2017 yet rushed for 1,161 yards and 13 touchdowns to earn second-team All-Big 12 honors.

Deep threat Marquise Brown and big CeeDee Lamb highlight a deep and talented receiving corps.

The offensive line, even minus Brown, projects as a strength, with Bobby Evans moving from right tackle to the left side and headlining a group that includes two other returning starters and is a full two deep.

DEFENSE Mayfield and the dynamic offense covered up some defensive deficiencies the past two seasons, including last fall, when Oklahoma ranked 87th in passing yards allowed.

The Sooners have a lot of bodies and solid experience across the defensive front, yet they need difference makers to emerge. Veteran tackles Amani Bledsoe and Marquise Overton remain, although freshmen may be called on to bolster the ends.

Youth is in play in the secondary, too, with only four upperclassmen among 13 scholarship players. Safety Khalil Haughton is the only senior projected to start. Parnell Motley and Tre Norwood return as starting corners, although freshman spring sensation Brendan Radley-Hiles is on the verge.

There's more stability at linebacker, where the tough and instinctive Kenneth Murray earned Freshman All-America honors a year ago. Caleb Kelly also returns as a starter.

SPECIALISTS Oklahoma's special teams remain a strength, largely because of the work of Austin Seibert, who earned second-team All-Big 12 notice as a kicker and honorable mention honors as punter last season. He ranks third in career scoring and fifth in career field goals made. He stands fifth all-time at Oklahoma with a 41.8-yard career punting average. The Sooners would like to become more dynamic in the return game, and they have that potential with holdovers Lamb and reserve running back Marcelias Sutton.

FINAL ANALYSIS In Norman, they're used to replacing All-Americans and continuing to win big. So downgrade the Sooners with caution. Sure, the coaches would like to be more settled at quarterback. And the schedule doesn't offer the opportunity to ease into things, with UCLA visiting in Week 2, followed by the Big 12 opener at Iowa State the following Saturday. Still, if Murray or Kendall takes hold of the quarterback position, the Sooners will again have the look of a Big 12 favorite and CFB Playoff contender.



RODNEY ANDERSON

"(Rodney Anderson) is a grown man back there. Everyone saw what he could do in the Playoff, and he's only going to get better."

— An opposing Big 12 assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	5	**Marquise Brown (Jr.)**	12	A.D. Miller (Jr.)	
WR	2	**CeeDee Lamb (So.)**	14	Charleston Rambo (Fr.)	
WR	3	Mykel Jones (Jr.)	17	Jaqualyn Crawford (Fr.)	
LT	71	**Bobby Evans (Jr.)**	73	Quinn Mittermeier (Sr.)	
LG	72	**Ben Powers (Sr.)**	54	Marquis Hayes (Fr.)	
C	56	Creed Humphrey (Fr.)	68	Jonathan Alvarez (Sr.)	
RG	75	**Dru Samia (Sr.)**	52	Tyrese Robinson (Fr.)	
RT	74	Cody Ford (Jr.)		Brey Walker (Fr.)	
TE	80	Grant Calcaterra (So.)	84	Lee Morris (Jr.)	
QB	1	Kyler Murray (Jr.)	10	Austin Kendall (So.)	
RB	24	**Rodney Anderson (Jr.)**	4	Trey Sermon (So.)	

DEFENSE (5)

DE	55	Kenneth Mann (Jr.)	7	Ronnie Perkins (Fr.)	
DT	91	Dillon Faamatau (Jr.)	97	**Marquise Overton (Sr.)**	
DT	72	**Amani Bledsoe (Jr.)**	90	Neville Gallimore (Jr.)	
DE	31	Jalen Redmond (Fr.)	42	Mark Jackson Jr. (Jr.)	
SLB	19	**Caleb Kelly (Jr.)**	15	Addison Gumbs (So.)	
WLB	9	**Kenneth Murray (So.)**	18	Curtis Bolton (Sr.)	
MLB	40	Jon-Michael Terry (So.)	30	Levi Draper (Fr.)	
CB	11	**Parnell Motley (Jr.)**	13	Tre Norwood (So.)	
CB	44	Brendan Radley-Hiles (Fr.)	1	Jordan Parker (So.)	
SS	8	Khalil Haughton (Sr.)	10	Patrick Fields (Fr.)	
FS	20	Robert Barnes (So.)	28	Chanse Sylvie (Jr.)	

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	43	Austin Seibert (Sr.)	KR	21	Marcelias Sutton (Sr.)
P	43	Austin Seibert (Sr.)	PR	2	CeeDee Lamb (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Kyler Murray, 21-18-359-0, 3 TDs
Rushing: Rodney Anderson, 188 att., 1,161 yds., 13 TDs
Receiving: Marquise Brown, 57 rec., 1,095 yds., 7 TDs
Tackles: Kenneth Murray, 78
Sacks: Kenneth Mann, 5.0
Interceptions: Parnell Motley, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Lincoln Riley
Record at School: 12-2 (1 year)
Career Record: 12-2 (1 year)
Offensive Coordinators: Bill Bedenbaugh, Cale Gundy
Defensive Coordinator: Mike Stoops
Norman, OK • Oklahoma Memorial Stadium (86,112)

Layne Murdoch

Oklahoma State **Cowboys**

National Forecast: **34** • Big 12 Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **8-4, 5-4 Big 12**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Missouri State
Sept.	8	South Alabama
Sept.	15	Boise State
Sept.	22	Texas Tech
Sept.	29	at Kansas
Oct.	6	Iowa State
Oct.	13	at Kansas State
Oct.	27	Texas
Nov.	3	at Baylor
Nov.	10	at Oklahoma
Nov.	17	West Virginia
Nov.	24	at TCU

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 10-3, 6-3 BIG 12

Aug.	31	Tulsa	W	59-24
Sept.	8	at South Alabama	W	44-7
Sept.	16	at Pittsburgh	W	56-21
Sept.	23	TCU	L	31-44
Sept.	30	at Texas Tech	W	41-34
Oct.	14	Baylor	W	59-16
Oct.	21	at Texas (ot)	W	13-10
Oct.	28	at West Virginia	W	50-39
Nov.	4	Oklahoma	L	52-62
Nov.	11	at Iowa State	W	49-42
Nov.	18	Kansas State	L	40-45
Nov.	25	Kansas	W	58-17
Dec.	28	vs. Virginia Tech #	W	30-21

#Camping World Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. CJ Moore, WR, Tulsa, OK
2. Spencer Sanders, QB, Denton, TX
3. Sean Michael Flanagan, S, Charleston, AR
4. Jonathan Shepherd, WR, Kilgore, TX
5. JayVeon Cardwell, CB, Cibolo, TX
6. Bryce Bray, OG, Bixby, OK
7. Tanner McCalister, CB, Heath, TX
8. Mike Scott, DE, Irving, TX*
9. Tyrese Williams, C, Houston, TX
10. Jahmyl Jeter, RB, San Antonio, TX

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG 12	NATIONAL
Scoring	45.0 ppg	2	4
Rushing	179.8 ypg	3	47
Passing	389.2 ypg	1	1
Total	568.9 ypg	2	2
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	29.4 ppg	6	85
Rushing	140.7 ypg	5	38
Passing	268.6 ypg	7	117
Total	409.3 ypg	5	79
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
+3	+0.23	6	46

STAT CORNER

4.4

OSU gained 30-plus yards on 4.4 plays per game in 2017, first in FBS. Passes accounted for 3.5 of these per game, also first.

OFFENSE Mike Gundy stood smiling on a temporary stage in Orlando last December, celebrating a win over Virginia Tech in the Camping World Bowl that completed Oklahoma State's third straight 10-win season. "Very proud of the seniors that are moving on," Gundy said of a group small in number, yet significant in accomplishment during the Cowboys' rise in the Big 12. "Now we've got to pass the torch."

The most challenging handoff takes place on offense, where quarterback Mason Rudolph and receiver James Washington, the most prolific pass-and-catch duo in school history, must be replaced. And everyone is watching, particularly at quarterback, where as many as four candidates are in a competition that could extend into August, if not longer.

Senior Taylor Cornelius carried an edge over sophomore Keondre Wudtee in the spring. Two more serious contenders — Hawaii grad transfer Dru Brown and prized recruit Spencer Sanders — were set to join the mix this summer. Brown offers experience that is otherwise lacking, while Sanders, a dynamic dual-threat option ranked by some as the top quarterback prospect in Texas, is considered the future at the position.

Whoever wins the job will have plenty of playmakers at his disposal. Versatile back Justice Hill returns off an All-Big 12 season that saw his 1,467 rushing yards lead the league. Jalen McCleskey, who has so far piled up 152 catches, 1,710 receiving yards and 15 touchdowns as a secondary option to Washington, is ready for the spotlight. And the receiver position is deep with proven and potential standouts.

The offensive line is solid, too, with the Cowboys counting eight players capable of starting, led by all-conference guard Marcus Keyes.

DEFENSE After ranking 53rd, 93rd, 100th, 92nd and, last season, 79th in total defense, Gundy made a change at coordinator, bringing in Jim Knowles to incorporate his 4-2-5 scheme. Knowles, successful in the same challenging position at Duke, inherits seven starters, including all-conference candidates in defensive end Jordan Brailford, linebackers Justin Phillips and Calvin Bundage and cornerbacks A.J. Green and Rodarius Williams.

Along with the new look, which should better fit in the spread-happy Big 12, there's an added emphasis on attacking and aggressiveness.

Depth is an issue at the tackle and corner spots, and the three safety positions all need to be filled, creating some concern.

SPECIALISTS Matt Ammendola shook off a shaky start last season to become a reliable and long-range weapon on field goals. His 23 made field goals led the league and ranked fifth in the FBS. Elsewhere, the Oklahoma State kicking game needs attention. Punter Zach Sinor, after an outstanding 2016 season, slumped last fall.

FINAL ANALYSIS Outside the program, all focus centers on replacing Rudolph and Washington, understandably. Inside, however, there's a quiet confidence, with 12 returning starters and plenty of playmakers on both sides of the ball.

A quarterback must emerge, but Oklahoma State coaches are excited about their options. The schedule offers two comfortable games — Missouri State and South Alabama — to get the quarterback some confidence, before Boise State arrives in Stillwater for an intriguing non-conference clash. If all goes well early, it could signal business as usual for the Cowboys.



JUSTICE HILL

"The best thing you can possibly have for a new quarterback is the ability to run the ball with power and dictate tempo. That's what they have."

— An opposing Big 12 assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)					
WR	1	Jalen McCleskey (Sr.)	2	Tylan Wallace (So.)	
WR	13	Tyron Johnson (Jr.)	81	LC Greenwood (Fr.)	
WR	17	**Dillon Stoner (So.)**	8	Braydon Johnson (Fr.)	
LT	51	Arlington Hambright (Jr.)	76	Dylan Galloway (So.)	
LG	75	**Marcus Keyes (Jr.)**	68	Deionte Noel (Sr.)	
C	72	**Johnny Wilson (Jr.)**	50	Ry Schneider (So.)	
RG	56	Larry Williams (Sr.)	79	Matt Kegel (So.)	
RT	67	Shane Richards (Sr.)	73	Teven Jenkins (So.)	
TE	41	**Britton Abbott (Sr.)**	80	Jake Ross (Jr.)	
QB		Dru Brown (Sr.)		Spencer Sanders (Fr.)	
RB	5	**Justice Hill (Jr.)**	27	J.D. King (So.)	
DEFENSE (7)					
DE	82	**Cole Walterscheid (Sr.)**	40	Brock Martin (Fr.)	
DT	79	**Darrion Daniels (Sr.)**	92	Cameron Murray (So.)	
DT	99	Trey Carter (Sr.)	56	Enoch Smith Jr. (Sr.)	
DE	94	**Jordan Brailford (Jr.)**	93	Jarrell Owens (Sr.)	
LB	19	**Justin Phillips (Sr.)**	33	Kevin Henry (Jr.)	
LB	1	**Calvin Bundage (Jr.)**	16	Devin Harper (So.)	
CB	4	**A.J. Green (Jr.)**	29	Bryce Brown (Jr.)	
CB	8	**Rodarius Williams (So.)**	14	Bryce Balous (Jr.)	
S	3	Kenneth Edison-McGruder (Sr.)	15	Sean Michael Flanagan (Fr.)	
S	20	Malcolm Rodriguez (So.)	35	Chance Cook (Jr.)	
S	18	Za'Carrius Green (Jr.)	28	Thabo Mwaniki (So.)	
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K	49	Matt Ammendola (Jr.)	**KR**	30 Chuba Hubbard (Fr.)	
P	29	Zach Sinor (Sr.)	**PR**	17 Dillon Stoner (So.)	

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Taylor Cornelius, 10-6-148-0, 0 TDs
Rushing: Justice Hill, 268 att., 1,467 yds., 15 TDs
Receiving: Jalen McCleskey, 50 rec., 645 yds., 5 TDs
Tackles: Justin Phillips, 64
Sacks: Jordan Brailford, 5.0
Interceptions: A.J. Green, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mike Gundy
Record at School: 114-53 (13 years)
Career Record: 114-53 (13 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Mike Yurcich
Defensive Coordinator: Jim Knowles
Stillwater, OK • Boone Pickens Stadium (60,218)

Bruce Schwartzman

TCU **Horned Frogs**

National Forecast: **24** • Big 12 Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **8-4, 6-3 Big 12**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Southern
Sept.	7	at SMU
Sept.	15	vs. Ohio State #
Sept.	22	at Texas
Sept.	29	Iowa State
Oct.	11	Texas Tech
Oct.	20	Oklahoma
Oct.	27	at Kansas
Nov.	3	Kansas State
Nov.	10	at West Virginia
Nov.	17	at Baylor
Nov.	24	Oklahoma State

#Arlington, TX

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 11-3, 7-2 BIG 12

Sept.	2	Jackson State	W	63-0
Sept.	9	at Arkansas	W	28-7
Sept.	16	SMU	W	56-36
Sept.	23	at Oklahoma State	W	44-31
Oct.	7	West Virginia	W	31-24
Oct.	14	at Kansas State	W	26-6
Oct.	21	Kansas	W	43-0
Oct.	28	at Iowa State	L	7-14
Nov.	4	Texas	W	24-7
Nov.	11	at Oklahoma	L	20-38
Nov.	18	at Texas Tech	W	27-3
Nov.	24	Baylor	W	45-22
Dec.	2	vs. Oklahoma #	L	17-41
Dec.	28	vs. Stanford %	W	39-37

#Arlington %Alamo Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Justin Rogers, QB, Bossier City, LA
2. Atanza Vongor, S, Grand Prairie, TX
3. Tevailance Hunt, WR, Texarkana, TX
4. Fabian Franklin, RB, Hattiesburg, MS
5. Anthony McKinney, OT, Rockford, IL*
6. Bryson Jackson, WR, Humble, TX
7. Trevon Moehrig-Woodard, CB, Spring Branch, TX
8. Ben Wilson, ILB, Sumner, WA
9. Taye Barber, WR, Cypress, TX
10. John Stephens, WR, Logansport, LA

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG 12	NATIONAL
Scoring	33.6 ppg	5	29
Rushing	174.1 ypg	4	53
Passing	245.1 ypg	8	52
Total	419.2 ypg	5	45
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	19.0 ppg	1	15
Rushing	103.9 ypg	1	5
Passing	227.5 ypg	1	70
Total	331.4 ypg	1	19
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
+3	+0.21	7	52

STAT CORNER

28

TCU opponents gained at least five yards on just 28% of their carries, second lowest in the country (behind only Ohio State).

OFFENSE Sophomore Shawn Robinson will take the reins of the TCU offense ahead of fellow four-star Justin Rogers, the prize in a heated recruiting battle against LSU who will likely redshirt to recover from knee surgery. Robinson started and won on a week's notice at Texas Tech last season. Two years ago Robinson was TCU's first four-star quarterback signee. Rogers signed in December as the program's highest-rated player since five-star running back Tyson Thompson in 2000.

At the same time, TCU has assembled perhaps its most impressive collection of skill talent on offense, with three four-star receivers, three four-star running backs and a four-star junior college offensive tackle arriving in the last three recruiting classes. Running back Fabian Franklin became a late bonus when he flipped from Mississippi State. Sophomore receiver Jalen Reagor looks like breakout material after leading the Horned Frogs with eight touchdown catches as a true freshman, including a 93-yard Alamo Bowl record score against Stanford.

The Frogs must rebuild their offensive line, however. Left guard Cordel Iwuagwu is the only full-time starter back, though Lucas Niang appears ready to either shift to left tackle or return to right tackle after starting eight games there last year. Junior college transfer Anthony McKinney enrolled early and might slide right in at tackle. "One thing about running back and quarterback — your confidence level grows with the experience of your offensive line," coach Gary Patterson says. "And right now, they're a work in progress."

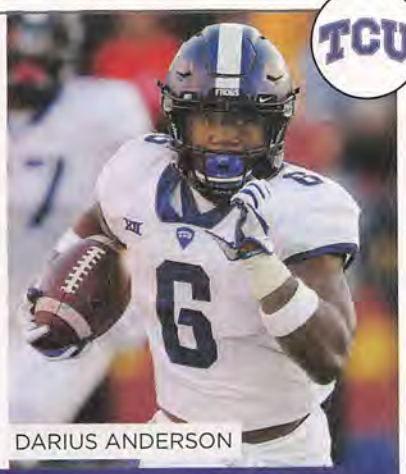
DEFENSE Defensive tackles Ross Blacklock and Corey Bethley keyed the Big 12's No. 1 run defense but also proved nimble enough to rush the passer, collecting three sacks and five QB hurries combined. The pass rush got a big boost when defensive end Ben Banogu (8.5 sacks) opted to play his senior season.

Linebacker Ty Summers slides into the spot where Travin Howard collected 343 tackles in three years, most under Patterson. Summers may own that record by year's end; he's only 72 behind. Converted safety Garret Wallow got a long look at the other linebacker, along with veterans Arico Evans and Alec Dunham.

The Frogs have high hopes for Innis Gaines, a hard-hitting strong safety, and will lean on free safety Nico Small, who has 14 pass breakups in 23 starts the past two seasons. Junior cornerback Jeff Gladney returns to his spot, and redshirt freshman Noah Daniels could grab the other corner if senior Julius Lewis can't return from second Achilles injury. At 6'0", Daniels is an intriguing prospect due to his size.

SPECIALISTS The Frogs return everyone except the long snapper. Cole Bunce secured placekicking duties late in the season and did nothing to lose the job in spring practice. Adam Nunez returns for a third season at punter and holder. KaVontae Turpin and freshman Taye Barber are the first options to return punts, and veterans Reagor and Darius Anderson appear locked in to handle kickoff returns.

FINAL ANALYSIS Like always, TCU will field a good defense. But Patterson and his staff have assembled what looks like the best offensive skill talent they've ever had. If the offensive line comes together, TCU will be closer to pairing an offense that can keep up with the Big 12's best with a defense that can win games on its own. The last time that happened, in 2014 and '15, TCU won 23 of 26 games, shared a league championship and nearly crashed the CFP.



DARIUS ANDERSON

"My guess is Shawn Robinson will be the guy at quarterback. (Gary Patterson) is not one to just throw a brand new guy in there early."

— An opposing Big 12 assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (3)				
WR	2	**Jaelan Austin (Sr.)**	19	Omar Manning (Fr.)
WR	22	Jarrison Stewart (Sr.)		Tevailance Hunt (Fr.)
WR	1	Jalen Reagor (So.)	11	Dylan Thomas (Jr.)
LT	68	Anthony McKinney (Jr.)	62	David Bolisomi (Jr.)
LG	70	**Cordel Iwuagwu (Jr.)**	57	Casey McDermott Vai (Sr.)
C	55	Kellton Hollins (So.)	53	Hunter Harris (So.)
RG	74	Chris Gaynor (Sr.)	52	Trey Elliott (Sr.)
RT	77	**Lucas Niang (Jr.)**	56	Austin Myers (So.)
HB	25	KaVontae Turpin (Sr.)	4	Taye Barber (Fr.)
QB	3	Shawn Robinson (So.)	19	Michael Collins (So.)
TB	6	Darius Anderson (Jr.)	33	Sewo Olonilua (Jr.)
DEFENSE (6)				
DE	15	**Ben Banogu (Sr.)**	96	Dennis Collins (Fr.)
DT	94	Corey Bethley (So.)	93	George Ellis (Fr.)
DT	90	**Ross Blacklock (So.)**	54	Joseph Broadnax (Sr.)
DE	91	L.J. Collier (Sr.)	40	Michael Epley (Sr.)
SLB	42	**Ty Summers (Sr.)**	7	Arico Evans (Sr.)
MLB		Jawuan Johnson (Sr.)	30	Garret Wallow (So.)
CB	12	**Jeff Gladney (Jr.)**	4	Keenan Reed (Jr.)
CB	21	Noah Daniels (Fr.)	28	Tony James (Sr.)
FS	2	**Niko Small (Sr.)**	20	La'Kendrick Van Zandt (So.)
SS	6	Innis Gaines (Jr.)	31	**Ridwan Issahaku (Sr.)**
WS	3	Markell Simmons (Sr.)	26	Vernon Scott (Jr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	37	Cole Bunce (Jr.)	**KR**	1 Jalen Reagor (So.)
P	29	Adam Nunez (Jr.)	**PR**	25 KaVontae Turpin (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Shawn Robinson, 27-13-184-0, 3 TDs
Rushing: Darius Anderson, 128 att., 768 yds., 8 TDs
Receiving: KaVontae Turpin, 41 rec., 394 yds., 1 TD
Tackles: Ridwan Issahaku, 66
Sacks: Ben Banogu, 8.5
Interceptions: Jeff Gladney, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Gary Patterson
Record at School: 160-57 (17+ years)
Career Record: 160-57 (17+ years)
Offensive Coordinators: Sonny Cumbie, Curtis Luper
Defensive Coordinator: Chad Glasgow
Fort Worth, TX • Amon G. Carter Stadium (45,000)

Tom Lynn

Texas Longhorns

National Forecast: **20** • Big 12 Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **9-4, 6-3 Big 12**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	vs. Maryland #
Sept.	8	Tulsa
Sept.	15	USC
Sept.	22	TCU
Sept.	29	at Kansas State
Oct.	6	vs Oklahoma %
Oct.	13	Baylor
Oct.	27	at Oklahoma State
Nov.	3	West Virginia
Nov.	10	at Texas Tech
Nov.	17	Iowa State
Nov.	23	at Kansas

#Landover, MD %Dallas, TX

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: (7-6, 5-4 BIG 12)

Sept.	2	Maryland	L	41-51
Sept.	9	San Jose State	W	56-0
Sept.	16	at USC (ot)	L	24-27
Sept.	28	at Iowa State	W	17-7
Oct.	7	Kansas State (ot)	W	40-34
Oct.	14	vs. Oklahoma #	L	24-29
Oct.	21	Oklahoma State (ot)	L	10-13
Oct.	28	at Baylor	W	38-7
Nov.	4	at TCU	L	7-24
Nov.	11	Kansas	W	42-27
Nov.	18	at West Virginia	W	28-14
Nov.	24	Texas Tech	L	23-27
Dec.	27	vs. Missouri %	W	33-16

#Dallas %Texas Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Caden Sterns, S, Cibolo, TX
2. BJ Foster, S, Angleton, TX
3. Jalen Green, CB, Houston, TX
4. DeMarvion Overshown, S, Arp, TX
5. Brennan Eagles, WR, Houston, TX
6. Anthony Cook, CB, Houston, TX
7. Joshua Moore, WR, Yoakum TX
8. Al'Vonte Woodard, WR, Houston, TX
9. D'Shawn Jamison, CB, Houston, TX
10. Ayodele Adeoye, ILB, St. Louis, MO

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG 12	NATIONAL
Scoring	29.5 ppg	7	52
Rushing	139.6 ypg	7	96
Passing	258.8 ypg	7	41
Total	398.5.6 ypg	7	65
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	21.2 ppg	3	29
Rushing	106.8 ypg	2	8
Passing	258.8 ypg	5	109
Total	365.6 ypg	2	41
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
+8	+0.62	4	22

STAT CORNER

27.1

Texas stuffed opponents at or behind the line on 27.1% of rushes, fourth in FBS. Malik Jefferson and Poona Ford will be missed.

OFFENSE Surprisingly, the offense at Texas under first-year coach Tom Herman lost nearly a touchdown's worth of points per game — when you factor out the seven non-offensive TDs scored by the Horns in 2017 — from the previous year under Charlie Strong. Many of the struggles resulted from players being moved in and out of the lineup.

The starter at quarterback is likely to be sophomore Sam Ehlinger, who played well enough last year to secure fourth-quarter leads against USC, Oklahoma and Oklahoma State — only to lose the games against USC and OSU, in part because of critical turnovers he committed in overtime.

Herman hopes the addition of offensive line coach Herb Hand from Auburn will improve the biggest problem position on last year's team. The arrival of Calvin Anderson, a grad transfer from Rice, will also help.

Leading receivers Collin Johnson and Lil'Jordan Humphrey return, but promising slot receiver and punt returner Reggie Hemphill-Mapps transferred. Productive sophomore running backs Daniel Young and Toneil Carter will be joined in fall camp by Keaontay Ingram, the No. 1 recruit at his position in the state of Texas.

The return of fifth-year senior tight end Andrew Beck from a season-ending broken foot should help the run game as much as the passing game.

If the line can steadily improve under Hand, the offense has a chance to be much better.

DEFENSE Todd Orlando's defense was so good in 2017 — giving up just 21.2 points per game, leading the Big 12 in third-down defense and leading the nation in non-offensive touchdowns (seven) — that the Horns' defensive coordinator got a raise from $1.1 million to $1.7 million annually for the next three years. Good timing, because gone are linebacker Malik Jefferson (the Big 12 Co-Defensive Player of the Year), defensive tackle Poona Ford (the Big 12 Defensive Lineman of the Year), safety DeShon Elliott (a Thorpe Award finalist) and 6'3" corner Holton Hill, who scored three non-offensive touchdowns last season.

But Orlando still has some firepower in senior ends Breckyn Hager, an awards candidate, and Charles Omenihu as well as linebackers Gary Johnson and Malcolm Roach.

The secondary is loaded with talent thanks to a ridiculous defensive back recruiting haul, including the nation's No. 1 and No. 3 safety prospects for 2018 — Caden Sterns and B.J. Foster, both early enrollees. Texas also signed the nation's No. 6 safety prospect in DeMarvion Overshown and cornerbacks Jalen Green and Anthony Cook — both national top-100 players in the 247Sports Composite. Cook was an early enrollee and was already battling to get into the two-deep at corner.

SPECIALISTS Replacing Ray Guy Award-winning punter Michael Dickson will be difficult, considering he pinned opponents inside the 20 a school-record 42 times last season. Texas will turn to Dickson's cousin, early enrollee freshman Ryan Bujcevski, who, like Dickson, is an import from Australia.

FINAL ANALYSIS Texas improved from five to seven wins in Herman's first season. Getting to a bowl game was a nice first step. Herman also established a culture and added some elite talent in his first full recruiting class. To challenge Oklahoma for supremacy in the Big 12, the Horns will have to show significant improvement on offense and hope that Orlando's defense doesn't drop off too much despite key personnel losses.



SAM EHLINGER

"That whole 'Texas isn't tough' thing is way overrated. It has nothing to do with tough, it's a lack of winning — and losing every way possible."

— An opposing Big 12 assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)					
WR	9	**Collin Johnson (Jr.)**	**84**	**Lil'Jordan Humphrey (Jr.)**	
WR	6	Devin Duvernay (Jr.)	1	John Burt (Sr.)	
WR	13	Jerrod Heard (Sr.)	86	Jordan Pouncey (Fr.)	
LT	66	Calvin Anderson (Sr.)	78	Denzel Okafor (Jr.)	
LG	**77**	**Patrick Vahe (Sr.)**	73	Patrick Hudson (So.)	
C	**56**	**Zach Shackelford (Jr.)**	68	Derek Kerstetter (So.)	
RG	72	Elijah Rodriguez (Sr.)	67	Tope Imade (So.)	
RT	**68**	**Derek Kerstetter (So.)**	52	Sam Cosmi (Fr.)	
TE	47	Andrew Beck (Sr.)	80	Cade Brewer (So.)	
QB	11	Sam Ehlinger (So.)	**7**	**Shane Buechele (Jr.)**	
RB	32	Daniel Young (So.)	30	Toneil Carter (So.)	
DEFENSE (6)					
DE	**90**	**Charles Omenihu (Sr.)**	91	Jamari Chisholm (Sr.)	
DT	**97**	**Chris Nelson (Sr.)**	94	Gerald Wilbon (Jr.)	
DE	44	Breckyn Hager (Sr.)	42	Marqez Bimage (So.)	
OLB	32	Malcolm Roach (Jr.)	23	Jeffrey McCulloch (Jr.)	
MLB	**45**	**Anthony Wheeler (Sr.)**	35	Ed Freeman (Sr.)	
WLB	33	Gary Johnson (Sr.)	40	Ayodele Adeoye (Fr.)	
NB	29	Josh Thompson (So.)	24	John Bonney (Sr.)	
CB	**2**	**Kris Boyd (Sr.)**	4	Anthony Cook (Fr.)	
CB	18	Davante Davis (Sr.)	38	Kobe Boyce (Fr.)	
SS	**11**	**P.J. Locke (Sr.)**	25	B.J. Foster (Fr.)	
FS	**19**	**Brandon Jones (Jr.)**	7	Caden Sterns (Fr.)	
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K		Cameron Dicker (Fr.)	**KR**	6 Devin Duvernay (Jr.)	
P	8	Ryan Bujcevski (Fr.)	**PR**	13 Jerrod Heard (Sr.)	

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Sam Ehlinger, 275-158-1,915-7, 11 TDs
Rushing: Sam Ehlinger, 114 att., 385 yds., 2 TDs
Receiving: Collin Johnson, 54 rec., 765 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Brandon Jones, 61
Sacks: Breckyn Hager, Charles Omenihu, 4.0
Interceptions: Kris Boyd, Davante Davis, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Tom Herman
Record at School: 7-6 (1 year)
Career Record: 29-10 (3 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Tim Beck, Herb Hand
Defensive Coordinator: Todd Orlando
Austin, TX • Darrell K Royal-Texas Memorial Stadium (100,119)

Layne Murdoch

Texas Tech **Red Raiders**

National Forecast: **54** • Big 12 Prediction: **9** • Projected Record: **5-7, 3-6 Big 12**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	vs. Ole Miss #
Sept.	8	Lamar
Sept.	15	Houston
Sept.	22	at Oklahoma State
Sept.	29	West Virginia
Oct.	11	at TCU
Oct.	20	Kansas
Oct.	27	at Iowa State
Nov.	3	Oklahoma
Nov.	10	Texas
Nov.	17	at Kansas State
Nov.	24	vs. Baylor%

#Houston, TX %Arlington, TX

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 6-7, 3-6 BIG 12

Sept.	2	Eastern Washington	W	56-10
Sept.	16	Arizona State	W	52-45
Sept.	23	at Houston	W	27-24
Sept.	30	Oklahoma State	L	34-41
Oct.	7	at Kansas	W	65-19
Oct.	14	at West Virginia	L	35-46
Oct.	21	Iowa State	L	13-31
Oct.	28	at Oklahoma	L	27-49
Nov.	4	Kansas State	(ot) L	35-42
Nov.	11	vs. Baylor #	W	38-24
Nov.	18	TCU	L	3-27
Nov.	24	at Texas	W	27-23
Dec.	23	vs. South Florida %	L	34-38

#Arlington %Birmingham Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Erik Ezukanma, WR, Fort Worth, TX
2. Myller Royals, WR, Abilene, TX
3. Demarcus Marshall, OG, Grand Prairie, TX
4. KeSean Carter, WR, The Woodlands, TX
5. Alan Bowman, QB, Grapevine, TX
6. Ta'Zhawn Henry, RB, Houston, TX
7. Sterling Galban, WR, Burnet, TX
8. Corey Fulcher, WR, Dallas, TX
9. Xavier Benson, OLB, Texarkana, TX
10. Hakeem White, OG, Waco, TX

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG 12	NATIONAL
Scoring	34.3 ppg	4	23
Rushing	140.9 ypg	6	94
Passing	333.7 ypg	3	9
Total	474.6 ypg	3	16
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	32.2 ppg	8	98
Rushing	161.6 ypg	7	62
Passing	282.2 ypg	8	123
Total	443.8 ypg	7	105
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
+11	+0.85	1	13

STAT CORNER

32.2

Tech allowed 32.2 points per game in 2017, 98th in the country. Not great, but an 11.3-point improvement over 2016 (43.5 ppg).

OFFENSE For the first time in a number of years, there are more questions and concerns about Texas Tech's offense than its defense. The Red Raiders will be extremely green at the skill positions this fall, as sophomore outside receiver T.J. Vasher is the only returning regular at the three combined positions of receiver, running back and quarterback.

The one position group on offense that's solidified heading into the fall is the offensive line. It's a unit that saw all five starters — each of whom return this season — see action on the field together at the same five positions in 11 straight games in 2017, a rarity in college football.

The opposite is true at receiver, however, as Texas Tech will lose 70 percent of its receiving production from a year ago with the departures of Keke Coutee, Dylan Cantrell and other seniors. At quarterback, the open race between McLane Carter and Jett Duffey will roll into fall camp. Both are dual-threat players who can get the job done with their arms and feet.

Tre King is the favorite to start at running back after blasting out of nowhere as a former junior college walk-on who ran for 623 yards (on a 4.8-yard average) and five TDs last season.

DEFENSE In stark contrast to the offense, this Tech defense under David Gibbs' guidance is a totally known commodity. Tech returns nine starters from a unit that surprised a year ago, when it made a 30-spot jump in scoring defense from 128th to 98th, a 54-spot jump in run defense from 116th to 62nd and a jaw-dropping 106-spot jump in turnovers gained from 112th to sixth.

Prime among those starters are disruptive end Eli Howard, block-eating tackle Broderick Washington, All-America candidate at linebacker Dakota Allen, stalwart safety Jah'Shawn Johnson and ball-hawking nickel back Justus Parker. It's a unit loaded with upperclassmen and experience, one that's looking to go from surprising upstart to stalwart stopper. Believe it or not, Texas Tech is playing defense these days.

SPECIALISTS Let's cut right to the chase: The kicking game was an unmitigated disaster for Texas Tech in 2017. Tech's four placekickers made just 12-of-23 field goals a year ago, missing critical kicks that would've likely won the Red Raiders games against West Virginia and Kansas State. Punting from Dominic Panazzolo was erratic as well, as he'd show off great placement only to follow it with a shank. To sum it up: Tech's only choice is to tighten up the kicking game in every aspect. A healthy Clayton Hatfield — he was the preseason first-team All-Big 12 kicker in 2017 — should help immensely on field goals.

FINAL ANALYSIS Texas Tech's defense got key stops consistently for the first time in years in 2017, but the offense often wasted away those opportunities, particularly in the red zone, where short-yardage situations and field goal tries often ended in disaster.

To take a step forward, the Red Raider offense simply has to get tougher on the ground, the quarterback — whoever wins the job — needs to be steady, the kicking game must take a huge step forward and the defense needs to stay on course. A veteran offensive line and a healthy kicker in Hatfield should help, but the quarterback's success or failure will weigh the heaviest on this team's season. Kliff Kingsbury's job depends on it.



DAKOTA ALLEN

"I just think you have to be committed to playing strong, fundamental defense. And I don't think Texas Tech is committed to doing that."

— An opposing Big 12 assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR		Seth Collins (Sr.)	1	Quan Shorts (Jr.)	
WR	20	JoJo Robinson (Sr.)	8	De'Quan Bowman (Sr.)	
WR	22	Antoine Wesley (Jr.)	17	Donta Thompson (Jr.)	
WR	9	TJ Vasher (So.)	83	Myller Royals (Fr.)	
LT	79	**Travis Bruffy (Jr.)**	65	Zach Adams (So.)	
LG	58	**Madison Akamnonu (Jr.)**	77	Jacob Hines (Sr)	
C	76	**Paul Stawarz (Sr)**	71	Bailey Smith (Jr)	
RG	56	**Jack Anderson (So.)**		Demarcus Marshall (Fr.)	
RT	78	**Terence Steele (Jr.)**	73	Dawson Deaton (Fr.)	
QB	6	McLane Carter (Jr.)	7	Jett Duffey (So.)	
RB	24	Tre King (Sr.)	21	Da'Leon Ward (So.)	

DEFENSE (9)

DE	53	**Eli Howard (So.)**	13	**Kolin Hill (Sr.)**
NT	97	Joe Wallace (So.)	98	Nick McCann (So.)
DT	96	**Broderick Washington (Jr.)**	91	Nelson Mbanasor (Fr.)
DE	94	Lonzell Gilmore (Jr.)	9	Tony Jones (Sr.)
WLB	40	**Dakota Allen (Sr.)**	11	Riko Jeffers (So.)
MLB	1	**Jordyn Brooks (Jr.)**	18	Christian Taylor (Jr.)
CB	23	**Damarcus Fields (So.)**	5	Octavious Morgan (Sr.)
CB	4	Desmon Smith (Jr.)	20	Adrian Frye (Fr.)
NB	31	**Justus Parker (Jr.)**	25	Douglas Coleman (Jr.)
S	15	**Vaughnte Dorsey (Sr.)**	21	Kisean Allen (Sr.)
S	7	**Jah'Shawn Johnson (Sr.)**	16	Thomas Leggett (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	96	Clayton Hatfield (Sr.)	**KR**	8	De'Quan Bowman (Sr.)
P	85	Dominic Panazzolo (Sr.)	**PR**	8	De'Quan Bowman (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: McLane Carter, 46-23-359-2, 2 TDs
Rushing: Tre King, 131 att., 623 yds., 5 TDs
Receiving: T.J. Vasher, 29 rec., 545 yds., 6 TDs
Tackles: Dakota Allen, 102
Sacks: Eli Howard, 5.5
Interceptions: Justus Parker, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Kliff Kingsbury
Record at School: 30-33 (5 years)
Career Record: 30-33 (5 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Kevin Johns, Clay McGuire
Defensive Coordinators: David Gibbs, Zac Spavital
Lubbock, TX • Jones AT&T Stadium (60,454)

Tim Umphrey

West Virginia **Mountaineers**

National Forecast: **22** • Big 12 Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **8-4, 6-3 Big 12**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	vs Tennessee #
Sept.	8	Youngstown State
Sept.	15	at NC State
Sept.	22	Kansas State
Sept.	29	at Texas Tech
Oct.	6	Kansas
Oct.	13	at Iowa State
Oct.	25	Baylor
Nov.	3	at Texas
Nov.	10	TCU
Nov.	17	at Oklahoma State
Nov.	23	Oklahoma

#Charlotte

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 5-4 BIG 12

Sept.	3	vs. Virginia Tech #	L	24-31
Sept.	9	East Carolina	W	56-20
Sept.	16	Delaware State	W	59-16
Sept.	23	at Kansas	W	56-34
Oct.	7	at TCU	L	24-31
Oct.	14	Texas Tech	W	46-35
Oct.	21	at Baylor	W	38-36
Oct.	28	Oklahoma State	L	39-50
Nov.	4	Iowa State	W	20-16
Nov.	11	at Kansas State	W	28-23
Nov.	18	Texas	L	14-28
Nov.	25	at Oklahoma	L	31-59
Dec.	26	vs. Utah %	L	14-30

#Landover %Heart of Dallas Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Dante Stills, DE, Fairmont, WV
2. Kwantel Raines, S, Aliquippa, PA
3. TJ Banks, TE, Duquesne, PA
4. Josh Norwood, CB, Valdosta, GA*
5. Leddie Brown, RB, Newark, DE
6. Junior Uzebu, OT, Alpharetta, GA
7. Blaine Scott, OG, West-Portsmouth, OH
8. Trey Lowe, QB, Collierville, TN
9. Mike O'Laughlin, TE, Glen Ellyn, IL
10. Dillon Spalding, WR, Lorton, VA

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG 12	NATIONAL
Scoring	34.5 ppg	3	22
Rushing	150.3 ypg	5	84
Passing	309.3 ypg	4	13
Total	459.6 ypg	4	20
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	31.5 ppg	7	90
Rushing	204.2 ypg	10	104
Passing	241.4 ypg	4	91
Total	445.5 ypg	8	107
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG 12**	**NATIONAL**
-7	-0.54	8	105

STAT CORNER

7.47

WVU's offense averaged 7.47 yards per play on first downs, seventh in FBS and behind only Oklahoma in the Big 12.

OFFENSE There hasn't been this kind of excitement in Morgantown about an offense since 2011, when WVU had Geno Smith, Tavon Austin and Stedman Bailey. The main reason is quarterback Will Grier, who is healthy again after recovering from a broken finger in last season's Texas game. He, All-America wideout David Sills and left tackle Yodny Cajuste all decided to spurn the NFL for a run at a Big 12 title.

"We had a pretty good offense," Grier says of last season's unit, "but we're going to fine-tune some things and be really good [this] year."

In 2017, Grier had one of West Virginia's all-time best passing seasons, hitting 250-of-388 for 3,490 yards and 34 touchdowns. The former Florida transfer was named the Big 12's Newcomer of the Year.

Sills received postseason accolades after tying for the national lead with 18 TD receptions. Gary Jennings had 37 more catches than Sills for 1,096 yards. West Virginia boasts a serious deep threat in Marcus Simms and added Alabama transfer T.J. Simmons.

Up front, WVU has two potential NFL tackles in Cajuste and Colton McKivitz. In the backfield, the Mountaineers return Kennedy McKoy, Martell Pettaway and a rising star in Alec Sinkfield.

DEFENSE There are serious concerns in Morgantown about the defense. Coaches are cautiously optimistic about the defensive front, but nose tackle Lamonte McDougle, who surprised with his play as a true freshman, announced he was transferring. A potential starter at defensive end, Adam Shuler, did likewise.

Highly regarded freshman Dante Stills will help out at end, while his brother, Darius, a 6'1", 288-pound sophomore, takes over at nose. Also, WVU is hoping USC transfer and former five-star recruit Kenny Bigelow has something in the tank after multiple knee injuries.

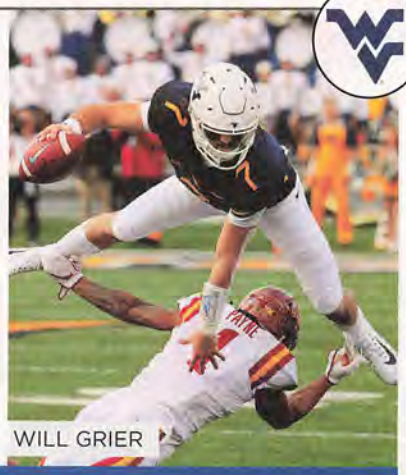
The Mountaineers suffered two setbacks mid-spring when senior strong-side linebacker Quondarius Qualls and No. 2 middle linebacker Brendan Ferns — a former four-star recruit — went down with ACL injuries. WVU was already shorthanded in the spring with standout weak-side linebacker David Long sitting out after shoulder surgery. Junior college signee Charlie Benton might have to take over for Qualls.

In the secondary, WVU defensive coordinator Tony Gibson is replacing both starting corners — Mike Daniels and Elijah Battle — and standout spur Kyzir White. Gibson moved three-year starter Dravon Askew-Henry to White's spur position and bumped senior Toyous Avery to Henry's starting bandit spot.

SPECIALISTS Skyler Simcox, who previously kicked for Division III Emory & Henry and then Western Kentucky, will battle holdover Evan Staley for the placekicking duties. Returning punter Billy Kinney handled 70 kicks for an average of 40.9 yards. Perhaps West Virginia's best special teams weapon, though, is returner Simms. Last season, he was No. 13 nationally in kickoff returns at 26.3 per attempt and No. 36 in punt returns at 5.8 yards.

FINAL ANALYSIS WVU fans were downright giddy for the 2018 team until departures and injuries hit the Mountaineer defense in the spring. Now, there's a wait-and-see approach while Gibson tries to patch the holes.

With Grier and perhaps the nation's best receiving corps, WVU will score. The only question is whether they'll have to score 50 per game to cover for the defense.



WILL GRIER

"They're loaded on offense, and I can't even imagine how good (Will) Grier will be after one full spin in this conference. They're going to be good."

— An opposing Big 12 assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)					
WR	12	**Gary Jennings (Sr.)**	19	Druw Bowen (So.)	
WR	9	T.J. Simmons (So.)	6	Reggie Roberson (So.)	
WR	13	**David Sills (Sr.)**	8	Marcus Simms (Jr.)	
LT	55	**Yodny Cajuste (Sr.)**	72	Kelby Wickline (Jr.)	
LG	73	**Josh Sills (So.)**		Michael Brown (Jr.)	
C	79	**Matt Jones (Jr.)**	78	Jacob Buccigrossi (So.)	
RG	65	Isaiah Hardy (Sr.)		Joe Brown (Sr.)	
RT	53	**Colton McKivitz (Jr.)**	70	Tyler Thurmond (Fr.)	
HB	88	Trevon Wesco (Sr.)	84	Jovani Haskins (So.)	
QB	7	**Will Grier (Sr.)**	6	Jack Allison (So.)	
RB	4	Kennedy McKoy (Jr.)	32	Martell Pettaway (Jr.)	
DEFENSE (4)					
DE	91	Ezekiel Rose (Sr.)		Dante Stills (Fr.)	
NT	56	Darius Stills (So.)		Kenny Bigelow (Sr.)	
DE	46	**Reese Donahue (Jr.)**	95	Jeff Pooler (So.)	
SLB		Charlie Benton (So.)	33	Quondarius Qualls (Sr.)	
MLB	10	Dylan Tonkery (So.)	31	Zach Sandwisch (So.)	
WLB	11	**David Long (Jr.)**	45	Adam Hensley (Jr.)	
CB	1	Derrek Pitts (So.)	22	Jake Long (So.)	
CB	24	Hakeem Bailey (Jr.)		Keith Washington (Jr.)	
FS	2	**Kenny Robinson (So.)**		Josh Norwood (Jr.)	
SPUR	6	**Dravon Askew-Henry (Sr.)**		Kwantel Raines (Fr.)	
BAN	16	Toyous Avery (Sr.)	9	JoVanni Stewart (Jr.)	
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K	30	Evan Staley (So.)	**KR**	8 Marcus Simms (Jr.)	
P	15	Billy Kinney (Sr.)	**PR**	8 Marcus Simms (Jr.)	

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Will Grier, 388-250-3,490-12, 34 TDs
Rushing: Kennedy McKoy, 125 att., 596 yds., 7 TDs
Receiving: Gary Jennings, 97 rec., 1,096 yds., 1 TD
Tackles: David Long Jr., 76
Sacks: Ezekiel Rose, 4.5
Interceptions: Kenny Robinson, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Dana Holgorsen
Record at School: 53-37 (7 years)
Career Record: 53-37 (7 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Jake Spavital
Defensive Coordinator: Tony Gibson
Morgantown, WV • Milan Puskar Stadium (60,000)

Bruce Schwartzman

BIG TEN PREVIEW

East	Predicted Order of Finish	West



1 OHIO STATE **BUCKEYES**
12-1, 8-1 Big Ten



2 MICHIGAN **WOLVERINES**
10-2, 7-2 Big Ten



3 PENN STATE **NITTANY LIONS**
9-3, 6-3 Big Ten



4 MICHIGAN STATE **SPARTANS**
9-3, 6-3 Big Ten



5 MARYLAND **TERRAPINS**
6-6, 4-5 Big Ten



6 INDIANA **HOOSIERS**
6-6, 3-6 Big Ten



7 RUTGERS **SCARLET KNIGHTS**
4-8, 1-8 Big Ten

1 WISCONSIN **BADGERS**
10-3, 7-2 Big Ten



2 IOWA **HAWKEYES**
8-4, 5-4 Big Ten



3 PURDUE **BOILERMAKERS**
7-5, 5-4 Big Ten



4 NORTHWESTERN **WILDCATS**
6-6, 4-5 Big Ten



5 NEBRASKA **CORNHUSKERS**
6-6, 3-6 Big Ten



6 MINNESOTA **GOLDEN GOPHERS**
6-6, 3-6 Big Ten



7 ILLINOIS **FIGHTING ILLINI**
3-9, 1-8 Big Ten

Big Ten Championship: **Ohio State over Wisconsin**

Games to Watch

SEPT. 1
MICHIGAN AT NOTRE DAME
A strong start is critical for Jim Harbaugh in Year 4, but Michigan faces a much-improved Notre Dame defense that brings back 10 starters.

SEPT. 8
IOWA STATE AT IOWA
The Hawkeyes open with three potentially tricky non-league foes — Northern Illinois, Iowa State and Northern Iowa — and need this one.

SEPT. 15
OHIO STATE VS. TCU
TCU's typically stout defense will provide a good first test for Ohio State's new starting quarterback in this "neutral" game in Arlington, Texas.

SEPT. 22
NEBRASKA AT MICHIGAN
The Big Ten opener for both teams — and Nebraska's first league contest under new coach Scott Frost — will be crucial.

SEPT. 22
WISCONSIN AT IOWA
If revenge doesn't motivate the Hawkeyes, who produced 66 total yards in last year's loss, the chance to gain a leg up in the West surely will.

SEPT. 29
OHIO STATE AT PENN STATE
Played earlier than usual, this game has decided the East Division — and, ultimately, the Big Ten champion — in each of the past two seasons.

Dobbins, Lewerke, Johnson, Taylor, Nelson, Jones, Smith, Epstein, Bosa: Tom Lynn; Bush, Ramsey: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; McSorley: Bruce Schwartzman; Austin: AP; Thorson: Margaret Bowles; Bryant: Tim Umphrey

2018 Unit Rankings

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
ILLINOIS	14	14	10	14	14	12	14
INDIANA	10	13	7	13	12	14	11
IOWA	4	11	8	6	6	13	6
MARYLAND	9	5	9	7	9	10	9
MICHIGAN	6	3	5	10	2	1	1
MICHIGAN STATE	2	4	3	4	5	3	3
MINNESOTA	12	9	13	11	11	8	8
NEBRASKA	11	8	6	5	8	9	12
NORTHWESTERN	8	10	11	8	4	4	7
OHIO STATE	5	2	1	2	1	5	2
PENN STATE	1	6	4	3	3	6	4
PURDUE	7	7	12	9	13	11	13
RUTGERS	13	12	14	12	10	7	10
WISCONSIN	3	1	2	1	7	2	5

Recruiting by School

1. Ohio State
2. Penn State
3. Michigan
4. Nebraska
5. Maryland
6. Michigan State
7. Minnesota
8. Iowa
9. Wisconsin
10. Indiana
11. Purdue
12. Illinois
13. Rutgers
14. Northwestern



JONATHAN TAYLOR, WISCONSIN



NICK BOSA, OHIO STATE

2018 Bowl Projections

Cotton Bowl (CFP): Ohio State vs. Alabama
Rose Bowl: Michigan vs. Washington
Fiesta Bowl: Wisconsin vs. Boise State
Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl: Penn State vs. Miami (Fla.)
Citrus Bowl: Michigan State vs. Mississippi State
Outback Bowl: Purdue vs. Florida
Holiday Bowl: Iowa vs. Stanford
Foster Farms Bowl: Northwestern vs. Oregon
Music City Bowl: Maryland vs. South Carolina
Pinstripe Bowl: Nebraska vs. NC State
Heart of Dallas Bowl: Minnesota vs. North Texas
Quick Lane Bowl: Indiana vs. Wake Forest

Big Ten Coordinator Carousel

Illinois: Offense
New: Rod Smith
Old: Garrick McGee

Maryland: Offense
New: Chris Beatty, Matt Canada
Old: Walt Bell

Michigan: Offense
New: Jim Harbaugh
Old: Tim Drevno

Michigan State: Defense
New: Mike Tressel
Old: Harlon Barnett, Mike Tressel

Nebraska: Offense
New: Troy Walters
Old: Danny Langsdorf

Nebraska: Defense
New: Erik Chinander
Old: Bob Diaco

Ohio State: Defense
New: Alex Grinch, Greg Schiano
Old: Greg Schiano

Penn State: Offense
New: Ricky Rahne
Old: Joe Moorhead

Purdue: Offense
New: Brian Brohm, JaMarcus Shephard
Old: Brian Brohm, Tony Levine

Rutgers: Offense
New: John McNulty
Old: Jerry Kill

Rutgers: Defense
New: Noah Joseph, Jay Niemann
Old: Bill Busch, Jay Niemann

OCT. 13
MICHIGAN STATE AT PENN STATE
Penn State gets a week off between its home showdowns with Ohio State and MSU, which has won four of the teams' last five meetings.

OCT. 20
MICHIGAN AT MICHIGAN STATE
Jim Harbaugh is 1–5 against Michigan's primary league rivals, but the lone triumph came in East Lansing two years ago.

OCT. 27
WISCONSIN AT NORTHWESTERN
Pat Fitzgerald's team — which has 27 wins since 2015 — might provide the stiffest challenge to Wisconsin in the West Division.

NOV. 10
OHIO STATE AT MICHIGAN STATE
The Spartans have lost their last six home games against Ohio State, but they'll be motivated after being whipped 48–3 last year in Columbus.

NOV. 10
WISCONSIN AT PENN STATE
It's a crucial late-season division crossover, and a rematch of the 2016 Big Ten championship. Wisconsin hasn't won in Happy Valley since 2003.

NOV. 24
MICHIGAN AT OHIO STATE
Whether "The Spot" was good or not in 2016, Harbaugh hopes to avoid becoming the first Michigan coach to begin his tenure 0–4 vs. Ohio State.


TRACE McSORLEY, PENN STATE

Big Ten Returning Leaders

Passing	ATT	COMP	PCT	YDS	TD	INT	AVG/G
Trace McSorley, Penn State	427	284	66.5	3,570	28	10	274.6
Clayton Thorson, Northwestern	434	262	60.4	2,844	15	12	218.8
Brian Lewerke, Michigan State	417	246	59.0	2,793	20	7	214.8

Rushing	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Jonathan Taylor, Wisconsin	299	1,977	6.6	13	75	141.2
J.K. Dobbins, Ohio State	194	1,403	7.2	7	77	100.2
Rodney Smith, Minnesota	229	977	4.3	3	51	81.4

Receiving	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Stanley Morgan Jr., Nebraska	61	986	16.2	10	80	89.6
JD Spielman, Nebraska	55	830	15.1	2	77	75.5
Tyler Johnson, Minnesota	35	677	19.3	7	67	67.7

Tackles: Trevor Morris, Rutgers (118); Thomas Barber, Minnesota (115)
Sacks: Joe Gaziano, Northwestern (9); Nick Bosa, Ohio State (8.5)
Interceptions: David Dowell, Michigan State (5); Two players tied with 4

2017 Big Ten Standings

EAST	BIG TEN	OVERALL	WEST	BIG TEN	OVERALL
Ohio State	8-1	12-2	Wisconsin	9-0	13-1
Penn State	7-2	11-2	Northwestern	7-2	10-3
Michigan State	7-2	10-3	Purdue	4-5	7-6
Michigan	5-4	8-5	Iowa	4-5	8-5
Rutgers	3-6	4-8	Nebraska	3-6	4-8
Maryland	2-7	4-8	Minnesota	2-7	5-7
Indiana	2-7	5-7	Illinois	0-9	2-10

2017 Bowl Results

Pinstripe Bowl: Iowa 27, Boston College 20
Foster Farms Bowl: Purdue 38, Arizona 35
Holiday Bowl: Michigan State 42, Washington State 17
Music City Bowl: Northwestern 24, Kentucky 23
Cotton Bowl Classic: Ohio State 24, USC 7
Fiesta Bowl: Penn State 35, Washington 28
Orange Bowl: Wisconsin 34, Miami 24
Outback Bowl: South Carolina 26, Michigan 19

2017 BIG TEN TEAM STATS & RANKINGS

OFFENSE

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
ILLINOIS	15.4 (14)	105.6 (14)	174.8 (10)	280.4 (13)
INDIANA	26.8 (6)	130.1 (12)	265.7 (3)	395.8 (6)
IOWA	28.2 (5)	139.2 (11)	190.2 (9)	329.5 (10)
MARYLAND	24.1 (11)	161.7 (8)	161.7 (12)	323.3 (11)
MICHIGAN	25.2 (T8)	177.7 (4)	171.2 (11)	348.9 (9)
MICHIGAN STATE	24.5 (10)	167.9 (7)	215.2 (7)	383.1 (8)
MINNESOTA	22.1 (12)	182.4 (3)	126.1 (13)	308.5 (12)
NEBRASKA	25.8 (7)	107.5 (13)	277.5 (2)	385.0 (7)
NORTHWESTERN	29.2 (4)	174.2 (5)	233.8 (6)	408.0 (4)
OHIO STATE	41.1 (T1)	243.2 (1)	262.8 (4)	506.0 (1)
PENN STATE	41.1 (T1)	170.2 (6)	290.2 (1)	460.3 (2)
PURDUE	25.2 (T8)	151.5 (9)	251.5 (5)	403.1 (5)
RUTGERS	18.0 (13)	147.1 (10)	115.6 (14)	262.7 (14)
WISCONSIN	33.8 (3)	222.9 (2)	192.1 (8)	415.0 (3)

DEFENSE

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
ILLINOIS	31.5 (12)	218.5 (14)	199.9 (6)	418.4 (12)
INDIANA	25.3 (10)	160.4 (9)	179.7 (4)	340.1 (6)
IOWA	19.9 (5)	144.6 (8)	212.8 (9)	357.5 (9)
MARYLAND	37.1 (14)	190.8 (12)	228.6 (12)	419.4 (13)
MICHIGAN	18.8 (3)	120.9 (6)	150.1 (1)	271.0 (2)
MICHIGAN STATE	20.0 (6)	95.3 (1)	202.3 (7)	297.6 (3)
MINNESOTA	22.8 (9)	172.2 (10)	174.5 (3)	346.7 (7)
NEBRASKA	36.4 (13)	214.8 (13)	221.4 (11)	436.2 (14)
NORTHWESTERN	20.1 (7)	107.7 (4)	249.5 (14)	357.2 (8)
OHIO STATE	19.0 (4)	105.1 (3)	195.9 (5)	300.9 (4)
PENN STATE	16.5 (2)	118.0 (5)	211.5 (8)	329.5 (5)
PURDUE	20.5 (8)	132.9 (7)	242.5 (13)	375.5 (10)
RUTGERS	28.3 (11)	181.8 (11)	216.8 (10)	398.6 (11)
WISCONSIN	13.9 (1)	98.4 (2)	163.6 (2)	262.1 (1)

ALL-BIG TEN TEAM

First-Team Offense

QB	**Trace McSorley**	6-0	198	Sr.	Penn State
RB	**J.K. Dobbins**	5-10	212	So.	Ohio State
RB	**Jonathan Taylor**	5-11	216	So.	Wisconsin
AP	**JD Spielman**	5-9	180	So.	Nebraska
WR	**Felton Davis**	6-4	195	Sr.	Michigan State
WR	**Stanley Morgan**	6-1	195	Sr.	Nebraska
TE	**Noah Fant**	6-5	241	Jr.	Iowa
C	**Tyler Biadasz**	6-3	322	So.	Wisconsin
OL	**Beau Benzschawel**	6-6	322	Sr.	Wisconsin
OL	**Michael Deiter**	6-6	321	Sr.	Wisconsin
OL	**David Edwards**	6-7	319	Jr.	Wisconsin
OL	**Michael Jordan**	6-7	310	Jr.	Ohio State


RASHAN GARY, MICHIGAN


J.K. DOBBINS, OHIO STATE

First-Team Defense

DL	**Nick Bosa**	6-4	263	Jr.	Ohio State
DL	**Rashan Gary**	6-5	281	Jr.	Michigan
DL	**Dre'Mont Jones**	6-3	290	Jr.	Ohio State
DL	**Chase Winovich**	6-3	253	Sr.	Michigan
LB	**Devin Bush**	5-11	222	Jr.	Michigan
LB	**T.J. Edwards**	6-1	248	Sr.	Wisconsin
LB	**Khaleke Hudson**	6-0	205	Jr.	Michigan
CB	**Lavert Hill**	5-11	177	Jr.	Michigan
CB	**David Long**	5-11	187	Jr.	Michigan
S	**D'Cota Dixon**	6-10	200	Sr.	Wisconsin
S	**Jordan Fuller**	6-2	204	Jr.	Ohio State

First-Team Specialists

K	**Rafael Gaglianone**	5-11	236	Sr.	Wisconsin
P	**Drue Chrisman**	6-3	215	So.	Ohio State
KR	**Parris Campbell**	6-1	208	Sr.	Ohio State
PR	**DeAndre Thompkins**	5-11	191	Sr.	Penn State

SECOND-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Brian Lewerke**	6-3	215	Jr.	Michigan State
RB	**Karan Higdon**	5-10	190	Sr.	Michigan
RB	**LJ Scott**	6-1	226	Sr.	Michigan State
AP	**Rodney Smith**	5-11	210	Sr.	Minnesota
WR	**Parris Campbell**	6-1	208	Sr.	Ohio State
WR	**Juwan Johnson**	6-4	229	Jr.	Penn State
TE	**Sean McKeon**	6-5	248	Jr.	Michigan
C	**Kirk Barron**	6-2	300	Sr.	Purdue
OL	**Ryan Bates**	6-4	305	Jr.	Penn State
OL	**Ben Bredeson**	6-5	308	Jr.	Michigan
OL	**Tommy Doles**	6-4	292	Sr.	Northwestern
OL	**Isaiah Prince**	6-7	310	Sr.	Ohio State

SECOND-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Joe Gaziano**	6-4	280	Jr.	Northwestern
DL	**Shareef Miller**	6-5	256	Jr.	Penn State
DL	**Anthony Nelson**	6-7	271	Jr.	Iowa
DL	**Kenny Willekes**	6-4	250	Jr.	Michigan State
LB	**Joe Bachie**	6-2	230	Jr.	Michigan State
LB	**Markus Bailey**	6-1	235	Jr.	Purdue
LB	**Paddy Fisher**	6-4	245	So.	Northwestern
CB	**Montre Hartage**	6-0	195	Sr.	Northwestern
CB	**Amani Oruwariye**	6-1	204	Sr.	Penn State
S	**David Dowell**	6-1	196	Jr.	Michigan State
S	**Jonathan Crawford**	6-2	197	Sr.	Indiana

SECOND-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Quinn Nordin**	6-1	195	Jr.	Michigan
P	**Blake Gillikin**	6-2	192	Jr.	Penn State
KR	**JD Spielman**	5-9	180	So.	Nebraska
PR	**Donovan Peoples-Jones**	6-2	199	So.	Michigan


LJ Scott
Michigan State


Shareef Miller
Penn State


Olive Sagapolu
Wisconsin


Ty Johnson
Maryland

THIRD-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Alex Hornibrook**	6-4	220	Jr.	Wisconsin
RB	**Miles Sanders**	5-11	211	Jr.	Penn State
RB	**Mike Weber**	5-10	214	Jr.	Ohio State
AP	**Ty Johnson**	5-10	208	Sr.	Maryland
WR	**Quintez Cephus**	6-1	206	Jr.	Wisconsin
WR	**Tyler Johnson**	6-2	190	Jr.	Minnesota
TE	**Louis Dorsey**	6-6	225	So.	Illinois
C	**Keegan Render**	6-4	307	Sr.	Iowa
OL	**David Beedle**	6-5	333	Sr.	Michigan State
OL	**Tariq Cole**	6-6	320	Sr.	Rutgers
OL	**Jerald Foster**	6-3	310	Sr.	Nebraska
OL	**Derwin Gray**	6-5	330	Sr.	Maryland

THIRD-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Carter Coughlin**	6-4	245	Jr.	Minnesota
DL	**Olive Sagapolu**	6-2	338	Sr.	Wisconsin
DL	**Mick Stoltenberg**	6-5	305	Sr.	Nebraska
DL	**Chase Young**	6-5	265	So.	Ohio State
LB	**Thomas Barber**	6-1	233	Jr.	Minnesota
LB	**Ryan Connelly**	6-3	236	Sr.	Wisconsin
LB	**Nate Hall**	6-2	230	Sr.	Northwestern
CB	**Jeffrey Okudah**	6-1	199	So.	Ohio State
CB	**Josiah Scott**	5-10	170	So.	Michigan State
S	**Antoine Brooks**	5-11	210	Jr.	Maryland
S	**Antoine Winfield**	5-10	204	Jr.	Minnesota

THIRD-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Miguel Recinos**	6-1	193	Sr.	Iowa
P	**Joe Schopper**	6-0	205	Sr.	Purdue
KR	**Ty Johnson**	5-10	208	Sr.	Maryland
PR	**J-Shun Harris**	5-8	166	Sr.	Indiana

McSorley, Miller: Bruce Schwartzman; Dobbins, Scott, Sagapolu, Johnson: Tom Lynn; Gary: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

Indiana **Hoosiers**

National Forecast: **63** • Big Ten East Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **6-6, 3-6 Big Ten**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at FIU
Sept.	8	Virginia
Sept.	15	Ball State
Sept.	22	Michigan State
Sept.	29	at Rutgers
Oct.	6	at Ohio State
Oct.	13	Iowa
Oct.	20	Penn State
Oct.	26	at Minnesota
Nov.	10	Maryland
Nov.	17	at Michigan
Nov.	24	Purdue

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 2-7 BIG TEN

Aug.	31	Ohio State	L	21-49
Sept.	9	at Virginia	W	34-17
Sept.	23	Georgia Southern	W	52-17
Sept.	30	at Penn State	L	14-45
Oct.	7	Charleston Southern	W	27-0
Oct.	14	Michigan	(ot) L	20-27
Oct.	21	at Michigan State	L	9-17
Oct.	28	at Maryland	L	39-42
Nov.	4	Wisconsin	L	17-45
Nov.	11	at Illinois	W	24-14
Nov.	18	Rutgers	W	41-0
Nov.	25	at Purdue	L	24-31

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Ronnie Walker Jr., RB, Hopewell, VA
2. Michael Penix Jr., QB, Tampa, FL
3. Reese Taylor, ATH, Indianapolis, IN
4. James Head Jr., DE, Miami, FL
5. Aidan Rafferty, OT, Kensington, MD
6. Jonathan King, DE, Tampa, FL
7. Devon Matthews, S, Jacksonville, FL
8. Jaylin Williams, CB, Memphis, TN
9. Madison Norris, DE, Indianapolis, IN
10. James Miller, ILB, Brandon, FL

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG TEN	NATIONAL
Scoring	26.8 ppg	6	78
Rushing	130.1 ypg	12	106
Passing	265.7 ypg	3	35
Total	395.8 ypg	6	69
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	25.3 ppg	10	52
Rushing	160.4 ypg	9	61
Passing	179.7 ypg	4	17
Total	340.1 ypg	6	27
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
-7	-0.58	12	106

STAT CORNER

31.8

Indiana gained 5.0 or more yards on only 31.8% of its non-sack carries, fifth-worst in FBS and a distant last in the Big Ten.

OFFENSE Tom Allen took over at Indiana last season with solid credentials on defense but questions on offense. Those questions linger. The Hoosiers struggled with inconsistency at quarterback, failed to produce a 1,000-yard back for the first time in four seasons and had more holes than usual on the line. Critics wondered why the Hoosiers played with a slower, more traditional tempo under coordinator Mike DeBord.

The QB dilemma grew during the spring when the Hoosiers added former Arizona starter Brandon Dawkins four days before their spring game. Peyton Ramsey was solid as a part-time starter but is returning from a knee injury and lacks arm strength. Freshman Nick Tronti and Michael Penix have not taken snaps in college. But Penix, who picked IU over Florida State, threw 61 TD passes in high school.

Nick Westbrook went down on the opening kickoff of the season, and the Hoosiers need him to return to his 2016 form when he led the team with 995 receiving yards for six touchdowns. Undersized Whop Philyor has game-breaking speed. Luke Timian is not a deep threat from the slot, but his 68 receptions make him Mr. Reliable. Ryan Watercutter is likely to replace Ian Thomas at tight end because of his blocking skills.

Indiana's best offensive player could be halfback Morgan Ellison, who averaged nearly 5.0 yards per carry and had a pair of 100-yard games. The offensive line should benefit from the addition of center Nick Linder, a graduate transfer who started at Miami (Fla.) before losing his job because of a shoulder injury.

DEFENSE Allen upgraded IU's defense to sixth best in the Big Ten last season in total yards allowed, but the challenge to maintain that improvement will be considerable because eight starters must be replaced.

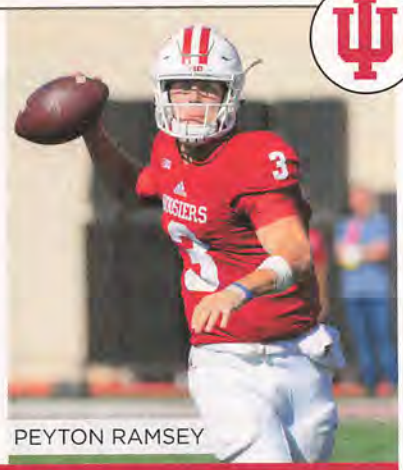
Jacob Robinson will anchor the line, which needs Nile Sykes to return from injury to supply a pass rush on the edge. Linebacker is a bigger issue because Tegray Scales and Chris Covington played the position as forcefully as any IU pair in three decades, and both are gone.

Allen's most talented player, Marcelino Ball, returns at the hybrid Husky — a defender who shifts between linebacker and safety. Ball should emerge as a team leader after missing nine games to injury. Freshman Bryant Fitzgerald was considered the most talented player in the 2017 recruiting class and used a redshirt season to improve his athleticism.

Three secondary starters depart, but Allen has made improving IU's athleticism at cornerback a priority. Andre Brown and A'Shon Riggins step in with experience, but Indiana must generate more turnovers after intercepting only five passes last season.

SPECIALISTS Allen was so concerned by the loss of placekicker Griffin Oakes that he recruited and awarded a scholarship to Charles Campbell, rated the ninth-best kicker nationally in the 2018 recruiting class. The coach is convinced IU needs elite special teams to win and believes the Hoosiers have another weapon in Australian punter Haydon Whitehead. Timian is a solid, but not spectacular, punt returner, while Philyor shows potential returning kickoffs.

FINAL ANALYSIS Allen landed Indiana's best recruiting class in years and has upgraded the program's athleticism. But depending on freshmen to win against Ohio State, Michigan and Penn State is not a winning formula. With questions at quarterback, the offensive line and across the defense, the ceiling for this team could be six wins.



PEYTON RAMSEY

"The offense as a whole couldn't stop turning the ball over. You want to lose games? You want to get a coach fired? Keep being lax with ball security."

— An opposing Big Ten assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)					
WR	15	Nick Westbrook (Jr.)	10	Donavan Hale (Jr.)	
WR	22	Whop Philyor (So.)	81	Ty Fryfogle (So.)	
WR	**25**	**Luke Timian (Sr.)**	39	Chris Gajcak (Jr.)	
LT	**54**	**Coy Cronk (Jr.)**	71	Delroy Baker (Sr.)	
LG	**76**	**Wes Martin (Sr.)**	51	Mackenzie Nworah (So.)	
C	50	Nick Linder (Sr.)	**68**	**Hunter Littlejohn (Jr.)**	
RG	72	Simon Stepaniak (Jr.)	56	Grayson Stover (So.)	
RT	**62**	**Brandon Knight (Sr.)**	77	Caleb Jones (Fr.)	
TE	85	Ryan Watercutter (Sr.)	86	Peyton Hendershot (Fr.)	
QB	3	Peyton Ramsey (So.)		Brandon Dawkins (Sr.)	
RB	**27**	**Morgan Ellison (So.)**	20	Cole Gest (So.)	
DEFENSE (3)					
DE	35	Nile Sykes (Sr.)	95	Brandon Wilson (Jr.)	
DT	**91**	**Jacob Robinson (Sr.)**	54	Ja'merez Bowen (Sr.)	
DT	98	Jerome Johnson (So.)	51	Mike Barwick (Sr.)	
DE	99	Allen Stallings (Jr.)	87	Michael Ziemba (So.)	
LB	40	Reakwon Jones (Jr.)	26	Kiante Walton (Sr.)	
LB	55	Mike McGinnis (Sr.)	44	Thomas Allen (Fr.)	
HB	42	Marcelino Ball (So.)	13	Isaac James (Jr.)	
CB	28	A'Shon Riggins (Jr.)	17	Raheem Layne (So.)	
CB	**14**	**Andre Brown (Jr.)**	21	LaDamion Hunt (So.)	
SS	**9**	**Jonathan Crawford (Sr.)**	31	Bryant Fitzgerald (Fr.)	
FS	29	Khalil Bryant (Jr.)	1	Juwan Burgess (Fr.)	
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K	82	Logan Justus (Jr.)	**KR**	22 Whop Philyor (So.)	
P	94	Haydon Whitehead (Jr.)	**PR**	25 Luke Timian (Sr.)	

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Peyton Ramsey, 205-134-1,252-5, 10 TDs
Rushing: Morgan Ellison, 143 att., 704 yds., 6 TDs
Receiving: Luke Timian, 68 rec., 589 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Jonathan Crawford, 62
Sacks: Jacob Robinson, 4.0
Interceptions: Jonathan Crawford, 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Tom Allen
Record at School: 5-8 (1+ year)
Career Record: 5-8 (1+ year)
Offensive Coordinator: Mike DeBord
Defensive Coordinator: Mark Hagen
Bloomington, IN • Memorial Stadium (52,929)

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

Maryland Terrapins

National Forecast: **51** • Big Ten East Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **6-6, 4-5 Big Ten**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	vs. Texas #
Sept.	8	at Bowling Green
Sept.	15	Temple
Sept.	22	Minnesota
Oct.	6	at Michigan
Oct.	13	Rutgers
Oct.	20	at Iowa
Oct.	27	Illinois
Nov.	3	Michigan State
Nov.	10	at Indiana
Nov.	17	Ohio State
Nov.	24	at Penn State

#Landover, MD

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 4-8, 2-7 BIG TEN

Sept.	2	at Texas	W	51-41
Sept.	9	Towson	W	63-17
Sept.	23	UCF	L	10-38
Sept.	30	at Minnesota	W	31-24
Oct.	7	at Ohio State	L	14-62
Oct.	14	Northwestern	L	21-37
Oct.	21	at Wisconsin	L	13-38
Oct.	28	Indiana	W	42-39
Nov.	4	at Rutgers	L	24-31
Nov.	11	Michigan	L	10-35
Nov.	18	at Michigan State	L	7-17
Nov.	25	Penn State	L	3-66

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Jaelyn Duncan, OT, Baltimore, MD
2. Austin Fontaine, DT, Hyattsville, MD
3. Darryl Jones, WR, Virginia Beach, VA
4. Ken Montgomery, CB, Tampa, FL
5. Evan Gregory, OG, Hyattsville, MD
6. TJ Bradley, OT, Leesburg, VA*
7. Byron Cowart, DE, Seffner, FL
8. Tyler Baylor, DE, Olney, MD
9. Chigoziem Okonkwo, TE, Powder Springs, GA
10. Jalen Alexander, DT, Chesapeake, VA

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG TEN	NATIONAL
Scoring	24.1 ppg	11	100
Rushing	161.7 ypg	8	69
Passing	161.7 ypg	12	116
Total	323.3 ypg	11	120
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	37.1 ppg	14	120
Rushing	190.8 ypg	12	93
Passing	228.6 ypg	12	71
Total	419.4 ypg	13	87
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
+2	+0.17	8	53

STAT CORNER

4

In 2016, three different QBs started at least one game for Maryland. In 2017, it was four. The injury bug really needs to stop biting.

OFFENSE The Terrapins are sporting a brand new pro-style offense, and more important, they're bringing along some healthy quarterbacks. That's the most-needed change for a program that stumbled to a 4–8 record after the top two signal callers were done for the year by Week 3. Kasim Hill, a prototype pro passer, and explosive mighty-mite Tyrrell Pigrome are both back, and Hill projects under center — yep, instead of the shotgun — in new coordinator Matt Canada's scheme. Hill can lean on a proven rushing attack spearheaded by the one-two punch of Ty Johnson and Lorenzo Harrison, who accounted for 1,497 rushing yards.

Johnson and Harrison will operate behind a veteran line that returns all five starters, including All-Big Ten tackle Derwin Gray, and has become deeper and more talented. In fact, it's the deepest Maryland line in some time, and that's another important ingredient in a winning Big Ten recipe. Less hurry-up this year, too, means hanging onto the ball to help a suspect defense.

DJ Moore's cleats won't be filled any time soon, but Taivon Jacobs can make plays in the passing game. A load of young receivers and backs can catch on quickly. Oh, and welcome back talented tight end Avery Edwards, who caught one pass in two years in the old offense but figures to get busy. Ditto fullback Tayon Fleet-Davis, who will also have a role.

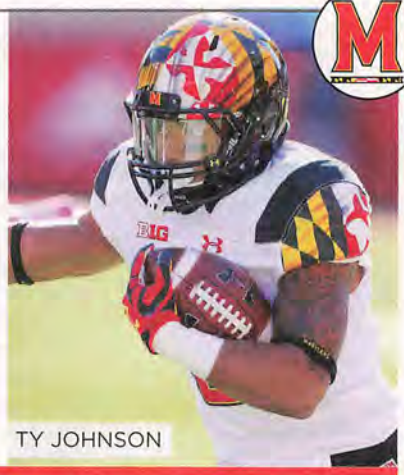
DEFENSE Jesse Aniebonam's return at Buck end could be as important to the defense as healthy QBs are to the offense. Aniebonam, coming off a 14-TFL, nine-sack season, broke his foot in the opener a year ago, and it fractured the front line. In 12 games, Maryland had just 16 sacks, 14 of those in three games. Byron Cowart, who started his career at Auburn, is on the other side, and there are a lot of big bodies vying for time in between the ends.

All-Big Ten linebacker Jermaine Carter Jr., who was seemingly in on every Terp tackle for three years, is gone, but Illinois grad transfer Tre Watson turned coaches' heads in the spring. Outside linebacker Isaiah Davis started nine games.

The secondary, headlined by headhunters Antoine Brooks and Darnell Savage, is the highlight of a porous returning defense. The Terps were last in the Big Ten in allowing 37.1 points per game and were 13th in total defense (419.4 ypg). Brooks, a former linebacker, was honorable mention all-conference as a nickel back, as was the hard-hitting and appropriately named Savage. Florida State transfer Marcus Lewis and returning starter Tino Ellis are the corners.

SPECIALISTS Mike Shinsky, with one career field goal attempt, came out of spring with the kicking job, though incoming freshman Joseph Petrino should challenge. Junior Aussie punter Wade Lees averaged 39.2 yards per boot. Burners like Javon Leake and Anthony McFarland can make a difference on returns for new special teams coach Matt Barnes.

FINAL ANALYSIS DJ Durkin's endless enthusiasm was tested last year. Injuries crippled a promising team that upset Texas in the opener. The Terrapins got pounded by the Big Ten's biggest bullies. Now there's a second straight top-30 recruiting class in tow, five new coaches, a new state-of-the-art indoor practice/sports medicine facility in New Cole Field House, and a whole new offense with some healthy quarterbacks. Big Ten foes may not have to "Fear the Turtle" just yet, but they'll have to start paying attention.



TY JOHNSON

"He's not the biggest guy on the field ... but (Tyrrell) Pigrome is the best QB on that team. He is one dangerous kid with the ball in his hands."

— An opposing Big Ten assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	81	Rayshad Lewis (So.)	22	Jeshaun Jones (Fr.)	
WR	12	**Taivon Jacobs (Sr.)**	10	DJ Turner (Jr.)	
WR	10	DJ Turner (Jr.)	9	Jahrvis Davenport (Sr.)	
LT	55	**Derwin Gray (Sr.)**	79	Jordan McNair (Fr.)	
LG	70	**Sean Christie (Sr.)**	72	Marcus Minor (So.)	
C	64	**Brendan Moore (Sr.)**	73	Johnny Jordan (So.)	
RG	75	**Terrance Davis (Jr.)**	68	Ellis McKennie (Jr.)	
RT	72	Marcus Minor (So.)	58	**Damian Prince (Sr.)**	
TE	82	Avery Edwards (Sr.)	17	Chig Okonkwo (Fr.)	
QB	11	Kasim Hill (Fr.)	3	Tyrrell Pigrome (So.)	
RB	6	**Ty Johnson (Sr.)**	2	Lorenzo Harrison (Jr.)	

DEFENSE (4)

DE	9	Byron Cowart (Jr.)	96	Brett Kulka (Sr.)
NT	91	Adam McLean (Jr.)	99	Breyon Gaddy (Fr.)
DT	50	**Mbi Tanyi (Sr.)**	95	Lawtez Rogers (Fr.)
BUCK	6	Jesse Aniebonam (Sr.)	27	Bryce Brand (So.)
MLB	33	Tre Watson (Sr.)	16	Ayinde Eley (Fr.)
OLB	22	**Isaiah Davis (Jr.)**	42	Nick Underwood (Jr.)
NB	25	**Antoine Brooks (Jr.)**	11	Fofie Bazzie (Fr.)
CB	19	Marcus Lewis (Jr.)	21	RaVon Davis (Sr.)
CB	17	Tino Ellis (Jr.)	14	Deon Jones (Fr.)
FS	4	**Darnell Savage (Sr.)**	26	Kenny Bennett (Fr.)
SS	20	Antwaine Richardson (Jr.)	24	Qwuantrezz Knight (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	41	Mike Shinsky (Jr.)	KR	20	Javon Leake (So.)
P	88	Wade Lees (Jr.)	PR	12	Taivon Jacobs (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Max Bortenschlager, 233-121-1,313-5, 10 TDs
Rushing: Ty Johnson, 137 att., 875 yds., 5 TDs
Receiving: Taivon Jacobs, 47 rec., 553 yds., 5 TDs
Tackles: Antoine Brooks Jr., 77
Sacks: Keiron Howard, 2.0
Interceptions: Darnell Savage Jr., 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: DJ Durkin
Record at School: 10-15 (2 years)
Career Record: 11-15 (2+ years)
Offensive Coordinators: Chris Beatty, Matt Canada
Defensive Coordinators: Jimmy Brumbaugh, Andy Buh
College Park, MD • Maryland Stadium (51,802)

Tim Umphrey

Michigan **Wolverines**

National Forecast: **5** • Big Ten East Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **10-2, 7-2 Big Ten**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at Notre Dame
Sept.	8	Western Michigan
Sept.	15	SMU
Sept.	22	Nebraska
Sept.	29	at Northwestern
Oct.	6	Maryland
Oct.	13	Wisconsin
Oct.	20	at Michigan State
Nov.	3	Penn State
Nov.	10	at Rutgers
Nov.	17	Indiana
Nov.	24	at Ohio State

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 5-4 BIG TEN

Sept.	2	vs. Florida #	W	33-17
Sept.	9	Cincinnati	W	36-14
Sept.	16	Air Force	W	29-13
Sept.	23	at Purdue	W	28-10
Oct.	7	Michigan State	L	10-14
Oct.	14	at Indiana (ot)	W	27-20
Oct.	21	at Penn State	L	13-42
Oct.	28	Rutgers	W	35-14
Nov.	4	Minnesota	W	33-10
Nov.	11	at Maryland	W	35-10
Nov.	18	at Wisconsin	L	10-24
Nov.	25	Ohio State	L	20-31
Jan.	1	vs. South Carolina %	L	19-26

#Arlington %Outback Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Aidan Hutchinson, DE, Dearborn, MI
2. Cameron McGrone, OLB, Indianapolis, IN
3. Mustapha Muhammad, TE, Missouri City, TX
4. Myles Sims, CB, Atlanta, GA
5. Joe Milton, QB, Orlando, FL
6. Jalen Mayfield, OT, Grand Rapids, MI
7. Ryan Hayes, TE, Traverse City, MI
8. Gemon Green, CB, DeSoto, TX
9. Christian Turner, RB, Buford, GA
10. Taylor Upshaw, DE, Bradenton, FL

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG TEN	NATIONAL
Scoring	25.2 ppg	8	91
Rushing	177.7 ypg	4	49
Passing	171.2 ypg	11	111
Total	348.9 ypg	9	105
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	18.8 ppg	3	13
Rushing	120.9 ypg	6	18
Passing	150.1 ypg	1	1
Total	271.0 ypg	2	3
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
-4	-0.31	10	90

STAT CORNER

28.9

Michigan stuffed opponents at or behind the line on 28.9% of rushes, best in FBS. Expect more of the same in 2018.

OFFENSE Michigan's attack lacked identity, organization and leadership in 2017. Harbaugh, Tim Drevno and Pep Hamilton tried to implement a complicated NFL-style offense with a host of freshmen and sophomores, and the results were predictable: No. 105 in total offense, No. 91 in scoring offense and only nine TD passes (fewest for Michigan since 1975).

Drevno's out, Ed Warinner and Jim McElwain are in, and Hamilton remains, although there's no official offensive coordinator. Michigan also brought in Ole Miss transfer Shea Patterson at quarterback and is hopeful he'll be granted immediate eligibility. Patterson outpaced Michigan's entire pass offense by himself last season in just seven starts at Ole Miss, throwing for 2,259 yards and 17 touchdowns.

Even if Patterson is eligible, though, he'll be playing behind a questionable offensive line and will have to develop chemistry quickly with talented young receivers Donovan Peoples-Jones and Tarik Black. The running game was one of the few bright spots offensively, and the return of Karan Higdon and Chris Evans gives Michigan some stability in the backfield.

Michigan has talent. But it needs to be developed, and the offense needs to be simplified. If Harbaugh can get back to building a solid foundation around a few key players, his offense can become efficient again.

DEFENSE The offense may have been a mess, but the Michigan defense was outstanding. The bigger frustration for Michigan fans, frankly, was how much an elite defense was wasted in 2016 and 2017. Well it's a good thing the Wolverines bring back most of the key pieces from last year's No. 3-ranked unit.

The Wolverines return 14 sacks between standout ends Rashan Gary and Chase Winovich. The team does lose All-America nose tackle Maurice Hurst, but former five-star prospect Aubrey Solomon is poised for a big year inside with veteran Bryan Mone and surging third-year nose tackle Michael Dwumfour.

The Wolverines have an All-America inside linebacker in Devin Bush and an All-America candidate next to him in Khaleke Hudson.

Michigan featured the best pass defense in America last season, allowing just 150.1 yards per game and 5.9 yards per attempt. Every starter in the secondary is back. Lavert Hill and David Long were graded as two of the top man-to-man cover corners nationally by Pro Football Focus.

SPECIALISTS Quinn Nordin had his hiccups a year ago, but a 19-of-24 performance on field goals from a first-year placekicker isn't too bad. Brad Robbins, like Nordin, had his problems, but he also showed flashes of why he was rated as the country's top-ranked punting prospect coming out of high school in 2017. Peoples-Jones was one of the best rookie punt returners in America last season.

FINAL ANALYSIS This is a pivotal season for Harbaugh, whose struggles against his three main rivals are well documented. His fourth Michigan team will once again be outstanding on defense. If the offense, a trouble spot in recent years, shows any improvement, this team can compete for a spot in the College Football Playoff — even against a difficult schedule that includes the usual suspects from the Big Ten East as well as Notre Dame (on the road) and Wisconsin (the top team from West). However, if the quarterback play remains an issue and the offensive line doesn't progress, it will be more of the same in Ann Arbor.



DEVIN BUSH

"I'll tell you that they will have the best defense in our league. Maybe even the best in the country. That allows you to make a bunch of mistakes on offense."

— An opposing Big Ten assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)					
WR	7	Tarik Black (So.)	41	Kekoa Crawford (Jr.)	
WR	9	Donovan Peoples-Jones (So.)	4	Nico Collins (So.)	
WR	88	Grant Perry (Sr.)	13	Eddie McDoom (Jr.)	
LT	71	Andrew Stueber (Fr.)	55	James Hudson (Fr.)	
LG	**74**	**Ben Bredeson (Jr.)**	59	Joel Honigford (Fr.)	
C	51	Cesar Ruiz (So.)	72	Stephen Spanellis (So.)	
RG	**50**	**Michael Onwenu (Jr.)**	72	Stephen Spanellis (So.)	
RT	**76**	**Juwann Bushell-Beatty (Sr.)**	75	Jon Runyan (Jr.)	
TE	**84**	**Sean McKeon (Jr.)**	**83**	**Zach Gentry (Jr.)**	
QB	2	Shea Patterson (Jr.)	18	Brandon Peters (So.)	
RB	**22**	**Karan Higdon (Sr.)**	12	Chris Evans (Jr.)	
DEFENSE (8)					
DE	**3**	**Rashan Gary (Jr.)**	2	Carlo Kemp (Jr.)	
DT	5	Aubrey Solomon (So.)	93	Lawrence Marshall (Sr.)	
DT	50	Michael Dwumfour (Jr.)	90	Bryan Mone (Sr.)	
DE	**15**	**Chase Winovich (Sr.)**	19	Kwity Paye (So.)	
SLB	**7**	**Khaleke Hudson (Jr.)**	59	Noah Furbush (Sr.)	
MLB	**10**	**Devin Bush (Jr.)**	35	Josh Uche (Jr.)	
WLB	12	Josh Ross (So.)	36	Devin Gil (Jr.)	
CB	**24**	**Lavert Hill (Jr.)**	1	Ambry Thomas (So.)	
CB	**22**	**David Long (Jr.)**	28	Brandon Watson (Sr.)	
FS	**23**	**Tyree Kinnel (Sr.)**	16	Jaylen Kelly-Powell (So.)	
SS	**14**	**Josh Metellus (Jr.)**	26	J'Marick Woods (So.)	
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K	3	Quinn Nordin (So.)	**KR**	1 Ambry Thomas (So.)	
P	3	Brad Robbins (So.)	**PR**	9 D. Peoples-Jones (So.)	

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Brandon Peters, 108-57-672-2, 4 TDs
Rushing: Karan Higdon, 164 att., 994 yds., 11 TDs
Receiving: Sean McKeon, 31 rec., 301 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: Devin Bush, 100
Sacks: Khaleke Hudson, 8.0; Chase Winovich, 8.0
Interceptions: Four players tied with 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Jim Harbaugh
Record at School: 28-11 (3 years)
Career Record: 86-38 (10 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Jim Harbaugh
Defensive Coordinator: Don Brown
Ann Arbor, MI • Michigan Stadium (107,601)

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

Michigan State **Spartans**

National Forecast: **12** • Big Ten East Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **9-3, 6-3 Big Ten**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Utah State
Sept.	8	at Arizona State
Sept.	22	at Indiana
Sept.	29	Central Michigan
Oct.	6	Northwestern
Oct.	13	at Penn State
Oct.	20	Michigan
Oct.	27	Purdue
Nov.	3	at Maryland
Nov.	10	Ohio State
Nov.	17	at Nebraska
Nov.	24	Rutgers

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 10-3, 7-2 BIG TEN

Sept.	2	Bowling Green	W	35-10
Sept.	9	Western Michigan	W	28-14
Sept.	23	Notre Dame	L	18-38
Sept.	30	Iowa	W	17-10
Oct.	7	at Michigan	W	14-10
Oct.	14	at Minnesota	W	30-27
Oct.	21	Indiana	W	17-9
Oct.	28	at Northwestern (ot)	L	31-39
Nov.	4	Penn State	W	27-24
Nov.	11	at Ohio State	L	3-48
Nov.	18	Maryland	W	17-7
Nov.	25	at Rutgers	W	40-7
Dec.	28	vs. Washington State #	W	42-17

#Holiday Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Kalon Gervin, CB, Detroit, MI
2. Trenton Gillison, TE, Pickerington, OH
3. Xavier Henderson, ATH, Reynoldsburg, OH
4. Theo Day, QB, Dearborn, MI
5. Chase Kline, ILB, Chardon, OH
6. Michael Dowell, S, North Ridgeville, OH
7. Davion Williams, CB, Belleville, MI
8. James Ohonba, OT, Stockbridge, GA
9. Chris Jackson, CB, Marietta, GA
10. La'Darius Jefferson, ATH, Muskegon, MI

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG TEN	NATIONAL
Scoring	24.5 ppg	10	96
Rushing	167.8 ypg	7	62
Passing	215.2 ypg	7	76
Total	383.1 ypg	8	91
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	20.0 ppg	6	19
Rushing	95.3 ypg	1	2
Passing	202.3 ypg	7	37
Total	297.6 ypg	3	7
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
+3	+0.23	7	46

STAT CORNER

100

MSU returns 100% of its QB passing yards, 100% of its WR/TE receiving yards and 76% of its RB rushing yards in 2018.

OFFENSE Quarterback Brian Lewerke has added a level of fleet-footed slipperiness to Michigan State's foundation of two-back, between-the-tackles power, yielding a potential for entertaining success in 2018 for Mark Dantonio's team. Lewerke can go to the air from the pocket, on the move or while executing run-pass options, and do it with touch, zip and creative downfield vision.

He will pilot an offense that returns 10 starters from a unit that ranked No. 35 in the nation in points per possession.

Left tackle Cole Chewins is solid but struggled against Ohio State. Right guard Kevin Jarvis is a rising star, as is Jordan Reid. Reid is a threat to start at tackle, guard or center — he's that versatile. Matt Allen is the leading candidate to step in for his graduated brother at center.

Michigan State returns a pair of 50-catch receivers in Felton Davis and Darrell Stewart. Davis is a muscular, 6'4" monster who is blossoming as a mismatch target. Stewart is a smart hustler with good run-after-catch skills. Cody White, a 6'3" glider with 35 catches as a true freshman, is the next breakout receiver for MSU. A decent blocker, Matt Sokol has well-rounded skills at tight end, with 21 catches last year.

Senior LJ Scott has led the team in rushing for three straight years but has yet to break the 1,000-yard mark in a season. He provides big-back power but is inconsistent. A backup is needed. Sophomore Connor Heyward, son of former NFL standout Craig "Ironhead" Heyward, seems to have the chops.

DEFENSE Michigan State is back as a defensive force. The Spartans returns nine starters from a defense that ranked No. 7 in the nation in total defense and No. 2 in rushing defense.

Stubborn defensive tackles Mike Panasiuk and Raequan Williams are of championship quality, and they have good backups. Quick, sturdy hammerhead Joe Bachie might be the best middle linebacker of the Dantonio era. Kenny Willekes is a productive tornado against the run and pass at defensive end, but the Spartans are thin at that position and don't have the type of freak athlete on the edge that the true national championship contenders possess.

The secondary is heading toward exceptional, with obstructive 6'3" Justin Layne and handsy Josiah Scott forming a terrific tag team at cornerback, with capable backups in Tyson Smith and Josh Butler. Junior safety David Dowell had five interceptions and is improving as a hitter. Khari Willis is a great leader at strong safety.

SPECIALISTS Sophomore placekicker Matt Coghlin is reliable (15-of-19 last year). He nailed a 34-yarder on drenched grass to beat Penn State in the final seconds. Punter Jake Hartbarger ranked seventh in the Big Ten at 42 yards per punt, but his air time and MSU's coverage unit allowed only 31 punt return yards all season, ranking No. 3 in the country.

FINAL ANALYSIS Michigan State bounced back from a 3–9 season to reach double-digit wins for the sixth time in eight years. With 19 returning starters from a team that went 10–3, the Spartans are a dangerous contender in one of the best divisions in college football and will continue to be a problem for Penn State and Michigan. A return to the College Football Playoff for the first time since 2015 is unlikely but not impossible. No one is expecting Michigan State to leapfrog Ohio State, but that's the way Dantonio likes it.



BRIAN LEWERKE

"You want to know how you go from three wins to 10 wins? You play defense and you find a quarterback. How about that for a recipe of winning?"

— An opposing Big Ten assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (10)

WR	**18**	**Felton Davis (Sr.)**	21	Cam Chambers (So.)
WR	25	Darrell Stewart (Jr.)	13	Laress Nelson (So.)
WR	**7**	**Cody White (So.)**	16	Brandon Sowards (Sr.)
LT	**61**	**Cole Chewins (Jr.)**	79	Mustafa Khaleefah (Fr.)
LG	**59**	**David Beedle (Sr.)**	**70**	**Tyler Higby (Jr.)**
C	64	Matt Allen (So.)	66	Blake Bueter (Fr.)
RG	**75**	**Kevin Jarvis (So.)**	76	AJ Arcuri (So.)
RT	55	Jordan Reid (So.)	**62**	**Luke Campbell (So.)**
TE	**81**	**Matt Sokol (Sr.)**	89	Matt Dotson (So.)
QB	**14**	**Brian Lewerke (Jr.)**	12	Rocky Lombardi (Fr.)
RB	**3**	**LJ Scott (Sr.)**	11	Connor Heyward (So.)

DEFENSE (9)

DE	**48**	**Kenny Willekes (Jr.)**	97	Justice Alexander (Jr.)
DT	**72**	**Mike Panasiuk (Jr.)**	93	Naquan Jones (So.)
DT	**99**	**Raequan Williams (Jr.)**	41	Gerald Owens (Sr.)
DE	96	Jacub Panasiuk (So.)	52	Dillon Alexander (Sr.)
OLB	**5**	**Andrew Dowell (Sr.)**	34	Antjuan Simmons (So.)
MLB	**35**	**Joe Bachie (Jr.)**	38	Byron Bullough (Sr.)
OLB	17	Tyriq Thompson (Jr.)	26	Brandon Randle (So.)
CB	**2**	**Justin Layne (Jr.)**	19	Josh Butler (Jr.)
CB	**22**	**Josiah Scott (So.)**	15	Tyson Smith (Sr.)
SS	**27**	**Khari Willis (Sr.)**	9	Dominique Long (So.)
FS	**6**	**David Dowell (Jr.)**	10	Matt Morrissey (Sr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	4	Matt Coghlin (So.)	**KR**	11	Connor Heyward (So.)
P	25	Jake Hartbarger (Sr.)	**PR**	13	Laress Nelson (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Brian Lewerke, 417-246-2,793-7, 20 TDs
Rushing: LJ Scott, 201 att., 898 yds., 8 TDs
Receiving: Felton Davis III, 55 rec., 776 yds., 9 TDs
Tackles: Joe Bachie, 100
Sacks: Kenny Willekes, 7.0
Interceptions: David Dowell, 5

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mark Dantonio
Record at School: 100-45 (11 years)
Career Record: 118-62 (14 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Jim Bollman, Dave Warner
Defensive Coordinator: Mike Tressel
East Lansing, MI • Spartan Stadium (75,005)

Tom Lynn

Ohio State **Buckeyes**

National Forecast: **4** • Big Ten East Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **12-1, 8-1 Big Ten**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Oregon State
Sept.	8	Rutgers
Sept.	15	vs. TCU #
Sept.	22	Tulane
Sept.	29	at Penn State
Oct.	6	Indiana
Oct.	13	Minnesota
Oct.	20	at Purdue
Nov.	3	Nebraska
Nov.	10	at Michigan State
Nov.	17	at Maryland
Nov.	24	Michigan

#Arlington, TX

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 12-2, 8-1 BIG TEN

Aug.	31	at Indiana	W	49-21
Sept.	9	Oklahoma	L	16-31
Sept.	16	Army	W	38-7
Sept.	23	UNLV	W	54-21
Sept.	30	at Rutgers	W	56-0
Oct.	7	Maryland	W	62-14
Oct.	14	at Nebraska	W	56-14
Oct.	28	Penn State	W	39-38
Nov.	4	at Iowa	L	24-55
Nov.	11	Michigan State	W	48-3
Nov.	18	Illinois	W	52-14
Nov.	25	at Michigan	W	31-20
Dec.	2	vs. Wisconsin #	W	27-21
Dec.	29	vs. USC %	W	24-7

#Indianapolis %Cotton Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Nicholas Petit-Frere, OT, Tampa, FL
2. Taron Vincent, DT, Bradenton, FL
3. Tyreke Johnson, CB, Jacksonville, FL
4. Jaelen Gill, HB, Westerville, OH
5. Tyreke Smith, DE, Cleveland, OH
6. Jeremy Ruckert, TE, Lindenhurst, NY
7. Teradja Mitchell, ILB, Virginia Beach, VA
8. Tommy Togiai, DT, Pocatello, ID
9. Matthew Jones, C, Brooklyn, NY
10. Josh Proctor, S, Owasso, OK

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG TEN	NATIONAL
Scoring	41.1 ppg	1	6
Rushing	243.2 ypg	1	17
Passing	262.8 ypg	4	36
Total	506.0 ypg	1	7
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	19.0 ppg	4	15
Rushing	105.1 ypg	3	6
Passing	195.9 ypg	5	30
Total	300.9 ypg	4	9
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
+5	+0.36	4	34

STAT CORNER

+1.8

Ohio State averaged 5.3 points per trip inside the opponent's 40 and allowed just 3.5. That plus-1.8 margin ranked first in FBS.

OFFENSE Urban Meyer's system is proven, and then some. Still, there are some questions as to how this unit will function now that J.T. Barrett is no longer behind center. One of the most accomplished quarterbacks in Big Ten history, Barrett finally has exhausted his eligibility, and that means a true dual threat, trusted leader and willing distributor of the football is gone.

Fortunately, three strong candidates await in Dwayne Haskins, Joe Burrow and Tate Martell. Haskins has a laser-like right arm and opened some eyes with heroics in the Michigan game last year. Still, he needs to show he can run the offense smoothly and handle zone-read responsibilities. Burrow is poised and accurate but doesn't quite match Haskins in upside. Martell has strong instincts and running ability but needs more polish as a passer.

Whoever steps in at QB should be at least decently protected up front and have plenty of aerial targets. Plus, the OSU run game is stout. J.K. Dobbins amassed 1,403 rushing yards and averaged 7.2 per pop as a freshman in 2017. Once Mike Weber got back to form, he gave the Buckeyes a dynamic duo in the backfield.

The receiving corps is deep and returns its top seven performers from a year ago. Parris Campbell will be a feature of the offense. Meanwhile, K.J. Hill has developed into a quality possession receiver, and the Buckeyes have several field stretchers, including Johnnie Dixon, who had just 18 receptions last season but turned eight of them into scores.

Up front, All-America center Billy Price will be sorely missed, but tackles Isaiah Prince and Thayer Munford played well during the spring and are ready to pound people. There's plenty of depth at guard, where junior Michael Jordan is an All-Big Ten candidate.

DEFENSE The Buckeyes racked up a nation-leading 114 tackles for a loss last season and want to keep that aggression. They still can cover up mistakes in the back seven with Nick Bosa in an even more prominent role and sophomore sensation Chase Young at the other end spot. Inside, Dre'Mont Jones leads a group that also appears to have ample reinforcements.

Linebacker is a major concern. Malik Harrison is athletic but sometimes gets caught out of position. With an Achilles injury to Tuf Borland, Justin Hilliard and Baron Browning appear to be in a tight battle in the middle to fill Borland's spot until his return.

The secondary has promise, although the loss of top cover man Denzel Ward will be felt. At corner, Jeffrey Okudah and Shaun Wade are major talents, but Damon Arnette and Kendall Sheffield have more experience. Jordan Fuller is a complete player at safety. Who lines up next to him is unclear.

SPECIALISTS All four primary specialists return: punter Drue Chrisman, kicker Sean Nuernberger, kickoff man Blake Haubeil and long snapper Liam McCullough. The Buckeyes also boast experience at the return spots as Campbell and Weber ably handle kickoffs while Hill is the top option on punts.

FINAL ANALYSIS OSU ended last season with a win over That Team Up North and a defeat of USC in the Rose Bowl, but the 55–24 setback at Iowa still can't be explained. Plus, the late-season momentum was offset by the loss of a multitude of key players, Barrett atop the list. The Buckeyes will march onward with a new quarterback, a roster loaded with hungry talent and a defense that still plans to come after people.



J.K. DOBBINS

"They are so darn good at just about every position on the field. You wonder how they lose. Maybe that's why when they do lose, it's the end of the world."

— An opposing Big Ten assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	14	K.J. Hill (Jr.)	**11**	**Austin Mack (Jr.)**	
WR	9	Binjimen Victor (Jr.)	**83**	**Terry McLaurin (Sr.)**	
HY	**21**	**Parris Campbell (Sr.)**	30	Demario McCall (Jr.)	
LT	**59**	**Isaiah Prince (Sr.)**	58	Josh Alabi (Jr.)	
LG	**73**	**Michael Jordan (Jr.)**	66	Malcolm Pridgeon (Sr.)	
C	79	Brady Taylor (Sr.)	69	Matt Burrell (Jr.)	
RG	76	Branden Bowen (Jr.)	**78**	**Demetrius Knox (Sr.)**	
RT	75	Thayer Munford (So.)	71	Josh Myers (Fr.)	
TE	89	Luke Farrell (So.)	38	Rashod Berry (Jr.)	
QB	7	Dwayne Haskins (So.)	10	Joe Burrow (Jr.)	
RB	**2**	**J.K. Dobbins (So.)**	25	Mike Weber (Jr.)	

DEFENSE (5)

DE	**97**	**Nick Bosa (Jr.)**	18	Jonathon Cooper (Jr.)	
DT	**86**	**Dre'Mont Jones (Jr.)**	53	Davon Hamilton (Jr.)	
DT	67	Robert Landers (Jr.)	92	Haskell Garrett (So.)	
DE	2	Chase Young (So.)	9	Jashon Cornell (Jr.)	
WLB	39	Malik Harrison (Jr.)	20	Pete Werner (So.)	
MLB	**32**	**Tuf Borland (So.)**	5	Baron Browning (So.)	
SLB	16	Keandre Jones (Jr.)	19	Dallas Gant (Fr.)	
CB	**46**	**Damon Arnette (Jr.)**	8	Kendall Sheffield (Jr.)	
CB	1	Jeffrey Okudah (So.)	24	Shaun Wade (Fr.)	
SS	**4**	**Jordan Fuller (Jr.)**	25	Brendon White (So.)	
FS	14	Isaiah Pryor (So.)	23	Jahsen Wint (So.)	

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	96	Sean Nuernberger (Sr.)	**KR**	21	Parris Campbell (Sr.)
P	91	Drue Chrisman (So.)	**PR**	14	K.J. Hill (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Dwayne Haskins, 57-40-565-1, 4 TDs
Rushing: J.K. Dobbins, 194 att., 1,403 yds., 7 TDs
Receiving: K.J. Hill, 56 rec., 549 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: Jordan Fuller 70
Sacks: Nick Bosa, 8.5
Interceptions: Jordan Fuller, 2; Damon Arnette, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Urban Meyer
Record at School: 73-8 (6 years)
Career Record: 177-31 (16 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Ryan Day, Kevin Wilson
Defensive Coordinators: Alex Grinch, Greg Schiano
Columbus, OH • Ohio Stadium (104,944)

Tom Lynn

Penn State **Nittany Lions**

National Forecast: **11** • Big Ten East Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **9-3, 6-3 Big Ten**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Appalachian State
Sept.	8	at Pittsburgh
Sept.	15	Kent State
Sept.	21	at Illinois
Sept.	29	Ohio State
Oct.	13	Michigan State
Oct.	20	at Indiana
Oct.	27	Iowa
Nov.	3	at Michigan
Nov.	10	Wisconsin
Nov.	17	at Rutgers
Nov.	24	Maryland

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 11-2, 6-2 BIG TEN

Sept.	2	Akron	W	52-0
Sept.	9	Pittsburgh	W	33-14
Sept.	16	Georgia State	W	56-0
Sept.	23	at Iowa	W	21-19
Sept.	30	Indiana	W	45-14
Oct.	7	at Northwestern	W	31-7
Oct.	21	Michigan	W	42-13
Oct.	28	at Ohio State	L	38-39
Nov.	4	at Michigan State	L	24-27
Nov.	11	Rutgers	W	35-6
Nov.	18	Nebraska	W	56-44
Nov.	25	at Maryland	W	66-3
Dec.	30	vs. Washington #	W	35-28

#Fiesta Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Micah Parsons, ATH, Harrisburg, PA
2. Justin Shorter, WR, Monmouth Junction, NJ
3. Ricky Slade, RB, Woodbridge, VA
4. Rasheed Walker, OT, Waldorf, MD
5. Jayson Oweh, DE, Howell, NJ
6. PJ Mustipher, DT, Owings Mills, MD
7. Nana Asiedu, OT, Stafford, VA
8. Zack Kuntz, TE, Camp Hill, PA
9. Jahan Dotson, WR, Nazareth, PA
10. Pat Freiermuth, TE, Merrimac, MA

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG TEN	NATIONAL
Scoring	41.1 ppg	2	7
Rushing	170.2 ypg	6	59
Passing	290.2 ypg	1	23
Total	460.3 ypg	2	19
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	16.5 ppg	2	6
Rushing	118.0 ypg	5	14
Passing	211.5 ypg	8	47
Total	329.5 ypg	5	17
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
+12	+0.92	1	11

STAT CORNER

167.7

Over the last two years, Trace McSorley's passer rating has risen from 141.4 in October to 167.7 in November and beyond.

OFFENSE Saquon Barkley may be gone, but he wasn't the only game wrecker on Penn State's offense last season. Quarterback Trace McSorley led the Big Ten in passing at 274.6 yards per game, and he's back for one more season. McSorley was less inclined to go for broke as a junior than he had been as a first-year starter in 2016, and while his average per completion declined from 16.1 to 12.6 yards, his completion rate went from 57.9 to 66.5 percent. McSorley has a big target in 6'4", 229-pound wideout Juwan Johnson, who finished second on the team with 54 catches for 701 yards as a sophomore. And keeping McSorley company in the backfield is a promising runner in junior Miles Sanders. During his first two seasons, Sanders averaged 6.7 yards on 56 carries. He surely won't account for 32.8 percent of Penn State's all-purpose yards, as Barkley did last year. But that's not what the coaching staff is looking for. Coach James Franklin expects to use a more equitable rotation this fall, with seniors Mark Allen and Johnathan Thomas, redshirt freshman Journey Brown and true freshman Ricky Slade competing for carries. There's ample room for improvement, as the Lions finished sixth in the Big Ten and 59th in the FBS in rushing in 2017.

With four starters returning on the offensive line, Franklin predicts that his running backs "are going to surprise some people."

DEFENSE The Lions have some rebuilding to do in the middle. They need to find two new starters at defensive tackle and fill their box linebacker positions.

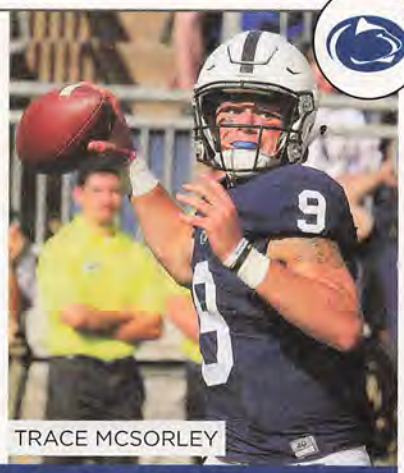
Juniors Kevin Givens and Robert Windsor were backups last year and appear to have the inside track at tackle, but Penn State may need its freshmen to make an early impact. The linebacker corps is so thin that five-star defensive end prospect Micah Parsons was moved to middle backer when he arrived in January. He was moved again in spring practice, this time to the Will outside spot, where the learning curve isn't quite so steep. But his most likely replacement in the middle is another freshman: redshirt Ellis Brooks.

The Lions are deep at defensive end after tying for the Big Ten lead with an average of 3.2 sacks per game in 2017. Shareef Miller led the way as a sophomore with a team-best five sacks.

The secondary might be fairly deep, too, despite the loss of all four starters. The Lions return senior cornerback Amani Oruwariye, a frequently used reserve who led the team with four interceptions a year ago. At the opposite spot, they're getting back John Reid, a starter in 2016 who missed last season with a knee injury.

SPECIALISTS Punter Blake Gillikin is one of the Big Ten's best. His career average of 43.0 yards ranks second in school history. But it's a much different story at placekicker. The Lions had only one kicker on campus in the spring, redshirt freshman walk-on Carson Landis. He'll be joined in preseason camp by scholarship freshman Jake Pinegar and walk-ons Rafael Checa and Vlad Hilling.

FINAL ANALYSIS Barkley is someone else's problem now, but opponents should still be wary of this offense, especially if McSorley displays the kind of accuracy he showed while completing all 12 of his third-down passing attempts vs. Washington in the Fiesta Bowl. Penn State is going to get its points. But can a graduation-depleted defense stop opponents from getting theirs? That's what will determine whether this team earns its third consecutive New Year's Six bowl berth.



TRACE MCSORLEY

"I love (Trace McSorley). A gym rat type of player, a guy that sells out play after play. He's what you want from a quarterback."

— An opposing Big Ten assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)				
WR	**84**	**Juwan Johnson (Jr.)**		Justin Shorter (Fr.)
WR	**3**	**DeAndre Thompkins (Sr.)**	1	KJ Hamler (Fr.)
WR	10	Brandon Polk (Jr.)	12	Mac Hippenhammer (Fr.)
LT	71	**Will Fries (So.)**	51	Alex Gellerstedt (So.)
LG	**74**	**Steven Gonzalez (Jr.)**	73	Mike Miranda (Fr.)
C	**66**	**Connor McGovern (Jr.)**	64	Zach Simpson (Jr.)
RG	62	Michal Menet (So.)	69	C.J. Thorpe (Fr.)
RT	**52**	**Ryan Bates (Jr.)**	**77**	**Chasz Wright (Sr.)**
TE	18	Jonathan Holland (Jr.)	83	Nick Bowers (Jr.)
QB	**9**	**Trace McSorley (Sr.)**	2	Tommy Stevens (Jr.)
RB	24	Miles Sanders (Jr.)	8	Mark Allen (Sr.)
DEFENSE (2)				
DE	**48**	**Shareef Miller (Jr.)**	99	Yetur Gross-Matos (So.)
DT	30	Kevin Givens (Jr.)	42	Ellison Jordan (So.)
DT	54	Robert Windsor (Jr.)	55	Antonio Shelton (So.)
DE	97	Ryan Buchholz (Jr.)	18	Shaka Toney (So.)
OLB	6	Cam Brown (Jr.)	11	Micah Parsons (Fr.)
MLB	13	Ellis Brooks (Fr.)	33	Jake Cooper (Sr.)
OLB	**7**	**Koa Farmer (Sr.)**	9	Jarvis Miller (Jr.)
CB	29	John Reid (Jr.)	5	Tariq Castro-Fields (So.)
CB	21	Amani Oruwariye (Sr.)	14	Zech McPhearson (So.)
SS	17	Garrett Taylor (Jr.)	23	Ayron Monroe (Jr.)
FS	4	Nick Scott (Sr.)	38	Lamont Wade (So.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	97	Carson Landis (Fr.)	**KR**	10 Brandon Polk (Jr.)
P	93	Blake Gillikin (Jr.)	**PR**	3 DeAndre Thompkins (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Trace McSorley, 427-284-3,570-10, 28 TDs
Rushing: Trace McSorley, 144 att., 491 yds., 11 TDs
Receiving: Juwan Johnson, 54 rec., 701 yds., 1 TD
Tackles: Koa Farmer, 48
Sacks: Shareef Miller, 5.0
Interceptions: Amani Oruwariye, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: James Franklin
Record at School: 36-17 (4 years)
Career Record: 60-32 (7 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Ricky Rahne
Defensive Coordinators: Tim Banks, Brent Pry
University Park, PA • Beaver Stadium (106,572)

Bruce Schwartzman

Rutgers Scarlet Knights

National Forecast: **87** • Big Ten East Prediction: **7** • Projected Record: **4-8, 1-8 Big Ten**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Texas State
Sept.	8	at Ohio State
Sept.	15	at Kansas
Sept.	22	Buffalo
Sept.	29	Indiana
Oct.	6	Illinois
Oct.	13	at Maryland
Oct.	20	Northwestern
Nov.	3	at Wisconsin
Nov.	10	Michigan
Nov.	17	Penn State
Nov.	24	at Michigan State

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 4-8, 3-6 BIG TEN

Sept.	1	Washington	L	14-30
Sept.	9	Eastern Michigan	L	13-16
Sept.	16	Morgan State	W	65-0
Sept.	23	at Nebraska	L	17-27
Sept.	30	Ohio State	L	0-56
Oct.	14	at Illinois	W	35-24
Oct.	21	Purdue	W	14-12
Oct.	28	at Michigan	L	14-35
Nov.	4	Maryland	W	31-24
Nov.	11	at Penn State	L	6-35
Nov.	18	at Indiana	L	0-41
Nov.	25	Michigan State	L	7-40

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Artur Sitkowski, QB, Old Bridge, NJ
2. Daevon Robinson, WR, Medford, NJ
3. Zihir Lacewell, WR, Staten Island, NY
4. Jalen Jordan, WR, Philadelphia, PA
5. Isaih Pacheco, RB, Vineland, NJ
6. Eddie Lewis, WR, New York, NY
7. Raiqwon O'Neal, OT, Conway, SC
8. Malik Dixon, S, Tampa, FL*
9. Paul Woods, WR, Buffalo, NY
10. Matt Thomas, DE, Brooklyn, NY

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG TEN	NATIONAL
Scoring	18.0 ppg	13	121
Rushing	147.1 ypg	10	87
Passing	115.6 ypg	14	125
Total	262.7 ypg	14	129
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	28.3 ppg	11	76
Rushing	181.8 ypg	11	84
Passing	216.8 ypg	10	55
Total	398.6 ypg	11	72
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
-5	-0.42	11	9

STAT CORNER

2.7

The Rutgers offense averaged only 2.7 gains per game of 20-plus yards. That ranked 129th in the nation.

OFFENSE There's a critical question facing new offensive coordinator John McNulty as he tries to inject life into a unit that was next to last nationally in total offense a year ago: Does he stay with experience at quarterback or hand the keys over to a talented true freshman? Senior Gio Rescigno has been largely ineffective during his 12 starts the past two seasons, throwing for just 517 yards a year ago. The spring arrival of four-star recruit Artur Sitkowski, a strong-armed 6'5", 215-pounder, could tempt McNulty to believe the future is now.

With graduate transfer Jonathan Hilliman (638 yards rushing yards for Boston College last season) and rising star Raheem Blackshear, who displayed big-play ability as a freshman, the running game will be solid. The return of three offensive line starters, including tackles Tariq Cole and Kamaal Seymour, should result in improvement for the unit.

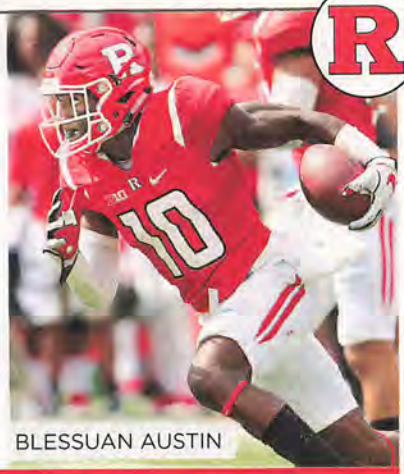
Outside of NFL-caliber tight end Jerome Washington, there's mostly uncertainty with a young receiving group. Hunter Hayek, with eight catches, is the leading returning receiver among the wideouts, though fellow sophomore Bo Melton (four catches for 83 years) appears poised for a breakout year.

DEFENSE If the defense is to carry this team to a bowl game, much depends on the back seven — as promising a group as Rutgers has had in a while. Weak-side linebacker Trevor Morris (a team-leading 118 tackles last year) is seeking his third straight 100-tackle season, while middle linebacker Deonte Roberts is coming off a 104-tackle junior year. The return of Tyreek Maddox-Williams from an ACL injury and the emergence of sophomore Tyshon Fogg make this is a sold, active unit. The secondary is brimming with talent too, with the Knights featuring three Big Ten-quality cornerbacks in four-year starter Isaiah Wharton, Blessuan Austin (returning from an ACL tear that limited him to four starts) and Damon Hayes. Returning starter Saquan Hampton and proven backup K.J. Gray make strong safety a strength.

The key is what happens up front after losing the sack leader and a three-year starting nose tackle. Kevin Wilkins returns to one end spot, with sophomore Elorm Lumor, who made three starts last year, manning the other one. Jon Bateky will again handle one tackle spot with sophomore Julius Turner taking over at nose tackle. Staying healthy is a priority for this group since there's little in the way of proven depth.

SPECIALISTS Australian Adam Korsak appears to be the answer to the void at punter created by the departure of All-Big Ten selection Ryan Anderson, with sophomore Justin Davidovicz adding placekicking responsibilities to the kickoff chores he handled last year. The return game, once a Rutgers strength, was nonexistent a year ago and needs to show dramatic improvement.

FINAL ANALYSIS A bowl game is the hope for Chris Ash's third season — a goal he is not shying away from. But if bowl eligibility does happen, it will likely be achieved early. Six of the first seven opponents Rutgers faces were a combined 20–52 last season, including three that lost 10 games or more. The closing five-game stretch of Northwestern, Wisconsin, Michigan, Penn State and Michigan State — a combined 52–14 last year — isn't conducive to making bowl headway. In the end, it all comes down to offensive improvement and the play at quarterback for this team.



BLESSUAN AUSTIN

"I'm actually shocked they won four games last year with the offense they had. They were horrific. There's no other way to say it."

— An opposing Big Ten assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	18	Bo Melton (So.)	81	Tyler Hayek (Fr.)	
WR	82	Hunter Hayek (So.)	**6**	**Mo Jabbie (So.)**	
WR	14	Everett Wormley (So.)	21	Eddie Lewis (Fr.)	
LT	**65**	**Tariq Cole (Sr.)**	79	Zack Heeman (Sr.)	
LG	75	Zach Venesky (Jr.)	77	Sam Vretman (So.)	
C	**55**	**Mike Maietti (So.)**	74	Sam Howson (So.)	
RG	73	Jonah Jackson (Jr.)	66	Nick Krimin (So.)	
RT	**54**	**Kamaal Seymour (Jr.)**	56	Micah Clark (So.)	
TE	**88**	**Jerome Washington (Sr.)**	86	Nakia Griffin-Stewart (Jr.)	
QB	**17**	**Giovanni Rescigno (Sr.)**	8	Artur Sitkowski (Fr.)	
RB	32	Jonathan Hilliman (Sr.)	25	Raheem Blackshear (So.)	

DEFENSE (8)

DE	7	Elorm Lumor (So.)	97	Mike Tverdov (Fr.)	
DT	50	Julius Turner (So.)	57	Jaohne Duggan (Fr.)	
DT	**95**	**Jon Bateky (Sr.)**	96	Willington Previlon (Jr.)	
DE	**99**	**Kevin Wilkins (Sr.)**	53	Brendan Bordner (Fr.)	
OLB	**5**	**Trevor Morris (Sr.)**	8	Tyshon Fogg (So.)	
MLB	**6**	**Deonte Roberts (Sr.)**	40	Brendan DeVera (So.)	
OLB	44	T. Maddox-Williams (So.)	25	Syhiem Simmons (Fr.)	
CB	**11**	**Isaiah Wharton (Sr.)**	4	Tre Avery (So.)	
CB	**1**	**Blessuan Austin (Sr.)**	**22**	**Damon Hayes (Jr.)**	
SS	29	Lawrence Stevens (So.)	2	Malik Dixon (Jr.)	
FS	**9**	**Saquan Hampton (Sr.)**	17	K.J. Gray (Jr.)	

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	95	Justin Davidovicz (So.)	KR	25	Raheem Blackshear (So.)
P	94	Adam Korsak (So.)	PR	82	Hunter Hayek (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Giovanni Rescigno, 100-47-517-1, 2 TDs
Rushing: Raheem Blackshear, 39 att., 238 yds., 3 TDs
Receiving: Jerome Washington, 28 rec., 282 yds., 1 TD
Tackles: Trevor Morris, 118
Sacks: Three players tied with 1.5
Interceptions: Jawuan Harris, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Chris Ash
Record at School: 6-18 (2 years)
Career Record: 6-18 (2 years)
Offensive Coordinator: John McNulty
Defensive Coordinators: Noah Joseph, Jay Niemann
New Brunswick, NJ • High Point Solutions Stadium (52,454)

AP

Illinois **Fighting Illini**

National Forecast: **95** • Big Ten West Prediction: **7** • Projected Record: **3-9, 1-8 Big Ten**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Kent State
Sept.	8	Western Illinois
Sept.	15	vs. South Florida #
Sept.	21	Penn State
Oct.	6	at Rutgers
Oct.	13	Purdue
Oct.	20	at Wisconsin
Oct.	27	at Maryland
Nov.	3	Minnesota
Nov.	10	at Nebraska
Nov.	17	Iowa
Nov.	24	Northwestern

#Chicago

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 2-10, 0-9 BIG TEN

Sept.	2	Ball State	W	24-21
Sept.	9	Western Kentucky	W	20-7
Sept.	15	at South Florida	L	23-47
Sept.	29	Nebraska	L	6-28
Oct.	7	at Iowa	L	16-45
Oct.	14	Rutgers	L	24-35
Oct.	21	at Minnesota	L	17-24
Oct.	28	Wisconsin	L	10-24
Nov.	4	at Purdue	L	10-29
Nov.	11	Indiana	L	14-24
Nov.	18	at Ohio State	L	14-52
Nov.	25	Northwestern	L	7-42

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Calvin Avery, DT, Dallas, TX
2. Verdis Brown, C, Chicago, IL
3. Reuben Unije, OT, Bradenton, FL
4. Coran Taylor, QB, Peoria, IL
5. Khalan Tolson, OLB, Saint Petersburg, FL
6. Jordyn Slaughter, OT, Belleville, IL
7. MJ Rivers, QB, Frisco, TX
8. Kievan Myers, OG, Dallas, TX
9. Julian Pearl, OT, Danville, IL
10. Carlos Sandy, WR, Fort Lauderdale, FL

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG TEN	NATIONAL
Scoring	15.4 ppg	14	127
Rushing	105.6 ypg	14	123
Passing	174.8 ypg	10	107
Total	280.4 ypg	13	127
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	31.5 ppg	12	90
Rushing	218.5 ypg	14	117
Passing	199.9 ypg	6	34
Total	418.4 ypg	12	86
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
-7	-0.58	12	106

STAT CORNER

.212

In the decade of the 2010s, Illinois is 14-52 in Big Ten play, a .212 win pct., worse than even the 2000s (0.325) or 1960s (0.377).

OFFENSE Lovie Smith made drastic offseason changes, hiring former Arizona assistant Rod Smith as offensive coordinator with the goal of spreading the field with as many formations as possible. "We want the defense to defend [the entire] width of the field," Rod Smith says.

The quarterback competition starts and stops with sophomore Cam Thomas — for now. He was the only scholarship quarterback with the team in the spring. Freshmen Coran Taylor, MJ Rivers and Matt Robinson will join the team during the summer. Former Nebraska and Virginia Tech quarterback A.J. Bush is coming in as a graduate transfer.

Illinois hasn't had a 1,000-yard rusher since 2010. The four returnees from 2017 — Mike Epstein, Ra'Von Bonner, Dre Brown and Reggie Corbin — combined for less than 800. All four dealt with injuries, but all four should be ready. Bonner and Corbin offer the change of pace Smith likes in his running backs, all of whom need to be able to catch passes. "It's a priority," Smith says.

Illinois fans were thrilled to see receiver Mike Dudek back on the field last fall after the former freshman sensation missed two seasons with torn ACLs. Sophomore Ricky Smalling was held out of the spring with an undisclosed injury but is expected back. He led the team in receiving yards as a freshman.

Four freshmen were in the starting O-line for the bulk of the 2017 season, including three first-year players. The lone senior, guard Nick Allegretti, is the unquestioned leader of the group.

DEFENSE Coordinator Hardy Nickerson wants to see improvement in the first- and second-down run game. It starts up front.

Bobby Roundtree and Isaiah Gay saw extensive time at end as freshmen and provide outside pressure. Inside, Tymir Oliver is a consistent contributor.

At linebacker, Nickerson is looking for a big senior season from Del'Shawn Phillips, who led the team in tackles. The Illini lost Jake Hansen to a torn ACL last season. He is expected back in time for the opener.

Nickerson wants to see Illinois improve on last season's nine interceptions. Bennett Williams led the team as a freshman with three. He is set at the safety spot opposite Stanley Green, another ball hawk. There is star potential at cornerback, where Nate Hobbs is back.

SPECIALISTS As a freshman, Australian punter Blake Hayes averaged 42 yards on 77 boots. Special teams coach Bob Ligashesky believes Hayes will improve steadily in his final three seasons. Chase McLaughlin hit 12-of-17 field goal attempts and was perfect on tries of 40 yards or less. Ligashesky wants more production from the return game.

FINAL ANALYSIS Smith's teams are 5–19 overall and just 2–16 in the Big Ten, including an unprecedented 0–9 in 2017. He has a six-year deal, so the administration is giving him time. The fans want to see some progress and some excitement. The schedule is challenging, with an early game against South Florida in Chicago, visits from Penn State and Iowa and trips to Wisconsin, Nebraska and Northwestern.

During the past two decades, the third year has been a charm for Illinois coaches. Ron Turner, Ron Zook and Tim Beckman earned bowl bids in their third seasons. If Rod Smith continues to have a golden touch with quarterbacks, like he did at Arizona, the offense will improve. Enough to bump the win total to six? Probably not.



MIKE EPSTEIN

"Mike Epstein is a tough runner, a guy who definitely doesn't look the part but sure as heck plays it. Lovie (Smith) needs about 20 more Mike Epsteins."

— An opposing Big Ten assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	18	Mike Dudek (Sr.)	6	Shaedon Meadors (Sr.)
WR	4	**Ricky Smalling (So.)**		Edwin Carter (Fr.)
WR	5	Carmoni Green (So.)	32	Justice Williams (Jr.)
LT	76	**Larry Boyd (So.)**	73	Jake Cerny (So.)
LG	63	**Alex Palczewski (So.)**	52	Adam Solomon (Jr.)
C	65	**Doug Kramer (So.)**	75	Kurt Gavin (So.)
RG	53	**Nick Allegretti (Sr.)**	71	Zeke Martin (Jr.)
RT	79	**Vederian Lowe (So.)**	70	Reuben Unije (Fr.)
TE	19	**Louis Dorsey (So.)**	13	Caleb Reams (Jr.)
QB	10	Cam Thomas (So.)		MJ Rivers (Fr.)
RB	26	Mike Epstein (So.)	2	Reggie Corbin (Jr.)

DEFENSE (7)

DE	97	**Bobby Roundtree (So.)**	91	Jamal Woods (So.)
DT	55	Jamal Milan (Jr.)		Calvin Avery (Fr.)
DT	96	**Tymir Oliver (Jr.)**	95	Kenyon Jackson (Jr.)
DE	92	Isaiah Gay (So.)	99	Owen Carney (So.)
LB	35	Jake Hansen (So.)	52	Ayo Shogbonyo (So.)
LB	3	**Del'Shawn Phillips (Sr.)**	9	Dele Harding (Jr.)
LB	10	James Knight (So.)	54	Marc Mondesir (So.)
CB	8	**Nate Hobbs (So.)**	6	Tony Adams (So.)
CB	31	**Cameron Watkins (Jr.)**		Kerby Joseph (Fr.)
S	4	**Bennett Williams (So.)**	24	Dawson DeGroot (So.)
S	7	**Stanley Green (Jr.)**	17	Kendall Smith (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	43	Chase McLaughlin (Sr.)	**KR**	8	Nate Hobbs (So.)
P	14	Blake Hayes (So.)	**PR**	18	Mike Dudek (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Cam Thomas, 66-28-375-5, 0 TDs
Rushing: Mike Epstein, 57 att., 346 yds., 3 TDs
Receiving: Ricky Smalling, 31 rec., 510 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Del'Shawn Phillips, 85
Sacks: Bobby Roundtree, 4.0
Interceptions: Bennett Williams, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Lovie Smith
Record at School: 5-19 (2 years)
Career Record: 5-19 (2 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Rod Smith
Defensive Coordinator: Hardy Nickerson
Champaign, IL • Memorial Stadium (60,670)

Tom Lynn

Iowa **Hawkeyes**

National Forecast: **35** • Big Ten West Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **8-4, 5-4 Big Ten**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Northern Illinois
Sept.	8	Iowa State
Sept.	15	Northern Iowa
Sept.	22	Wisconsin
Oct.	6	at Minnesota
Oct.	13	at Indiana
Oct.	20	Maryland
Oct.	27	at Penn State
Nov.	3	at Purdue
Nov.	10	Northwestern
Nov.	17	at Illinois
Nov.	23	Nebraska

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 4-5 BIG TEN

Sept.	2	Wyoming	W	24-3
Sept.	9	at Iowa State (ot)	W	44-41
Sept.	16	North Texas	W	31-14
Sept.	23	Penn State	L	19-21
Sept.	30	at Michigan State	L	10-17
Oct.	7	Illinois	W	45-16
Oct.	21	at Northwestern (ot)	L	10-17
Oct.	28	Minnesota	W	17-10
Nov.	4	Ohio State	W	55-24
Nov.	11	at Wisconsin	L	14-38
Nov.	18	Purdue	L	15-24
Nov.	24	at Nebraska	W	56-14
Dec.	27	vs. Boston College #	W	27-20

#Pinstripe Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Dallas Craddieth, S, St. Louis, MO
2. John Waggoner, DE, West Des Moines, IA
3. Tyler Linderbaum, DT, Solon IA
4. Spencer Petras, QB, San Rafael, CA
5. Julius Brents, S, Indianapolis, IN
6. D.J. Johnson, CB, Indianapolis, IN
7. Jeff Jenkins, OG, Crystal Lake IL
8. Daviyon Nixon, DT, Kenosha, WI*
9. Tyrone Tracy Jr., WR, Indianapolis, IN
10. Noah Shannon, DT, Montgomery, IL

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG TEN	NATIONAL
Scoring	28.2 ppg	5	66
Rushing	139.2 ypg	11	97
Passing	190.2 ypg	9	93
Total	329.5 ypg	10	117
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	19.9 ppg	5	17
Rushing	144.6 ypg	8	42
Passing	212.8 ypg	9	50
Total	357.5 ypg	9	36
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
+7	+0.54	2	26

STAT CORNER

46

Through interceptions or breakups, Iowa was responsible for 46% of its opponents' incomplete passes in 2017, second in FBS.

OFFENSE In leading Iowa to an 8–5 record, junior quarterback Nate Stanley performed much like his up-and-down team did last season. He was spectacular at times, including during victories over Iowa State and Ohio State when he threw five touchdowns in both games, but also bad at times, including in the 38–14 loss to Wisconsin when he completed 8-of-24 passes for just 41 yards. But the season ended on a high note as Iowa crushed Nebraska 56–14 in the regular-season finale in Lincoln before defeating Boston College 27–20 in the Pinstripe Bowl. It was Iowa's first bowl win since 2010.

Stanley has the luxury of throwing to one of the nation's top tight ends in junior Noah Fant, who scored 11 TDs last season (a record for an Iowa tight end) on just 30 catches. The 6'5", 241-pound Fant is a matchup nightmare with his speed and size, especially in the red zone.

Stanley won't have the luxury of handing off to star running back Akrum Wadley, who was a senior last season. Sophomores Toren Young and Ivory Kelly-Martin will be expected to carry the load this season after rushing for 193 and 184 yards, respectively, as reserves last season.

The offensive line was hit hard by graduation and by the loss of center James Daniels, who skipped his senior season to enter the NFL Draft. But three players return with starting experience, including both tackles.

Senior Nick Easley also returns after leading the team with 51 catches last season. Easley works well in the slot and is more of a possession receiver, while sophomores Ihmir Smith-Marsette and Brandon Smith will be counted on to stretch defenses.

DEFENSE Iowa defensive coordinator Phil Parker has the daunting task of replacing two unanimous first-team All-America selections in linebacker Josey Jewell and cornerback Josh Jackson. Jewell used up his eligibility as a senior last season, while Jackson decided to skip his senior season to enter the draft after rising from obscurity to stardom.

All three of Iowa's starting linebackers have to be replaced, and none of the replacements has much experience beyond playing on special teams.

The situation in the secondary isn't as worrisome. Junior safety Amani Hooker, who showed hints of stardom last season, is the leader of the back end.

The strength will be at defensive end, where the top four players return from last season, including sophomore A.J. Epenesa, a former five-star recruit.

SPECIALISTS Miguel Recinos returns after a junior season in which he made 11-of-13 field goal attempts. Recinos was so impressive that he kept Keith Duncan (hero of the 2016 Michigan win) on the bench. The situation at punter isn't nearly as stable with Colten Rastetter and Ryan Gersonde both trying to establish themselves as a reliable option. Rastetter only averaged 37.8 yards on 55 punts last season and was listed behind Gersonde during spring practice.

FINAL ANALYSIS There is a lot to like but also a lot to question about this Iowa team. Stanley and Fant both have star potential, the defensive ends might be the best in the Big Ten as a group and the kicking game is solid. On the other hand, the top two running backs have to be replaced, along with all three starting linebackers and an All-America cornerback.

One of Iowa's biggest strengths might be its schedule, which doesn't include games against Ohio State, Michigan or Michigan State — three of the Big 4 from the Big Ten East.



NATE STANLEY

"How about Nate Stanley? What a surprise he was. When was the last time Iowa had a quarterback put up those type numbers and that few turnovers?"

— An opposing Big Ten assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)				
WR	12	Brandon Smith (So.)	14	Kyle Groeneweg (Sr.)
WR	**84**	**Nick Easley (Sr.)**	6	Ihmir Smith-Marsette (So.)
LT	**74**	**Tristan Wirfs (So.)**	71	Mark Kallenberger (Fr.)
LG	59	Ross Reynolds (Sr.)	72	Coy Kirkpatrick (Fr.)
C	**69**	**Keegan Render (Sr.)**	61	Cole Banwart (So.)
RG	66	Levi Paulsen (Jr.)	68	Landan Paulsen (Jr.)
RT	**77**	**Alaric Jackson (So.)**	76	Dalton Ferguson (Sr.)
TE	**87**	**Noah Fant (Jr.)**	39	Nate Wieting (Jr.)
TE	**38**	**T.J. Hockenson (So.)**	39	Nate Wieting (Jr.)
QB	**4**	**Nate Stanley (Jr.)**	2	Peyton Mansell (Fr).
RB	28	Toren Young (So.)	21	Ivory Kelly-Martin (So.)
DEFENSE (4)				
DE	**98**	**Anthony Nelson (Jr.)**	90	Sam Brincks (Sr.)
DT	95	Cedrick Lattimore (Jr.)	66	Dalles Jacobus (So.)
DT	91	Brady Reiff (Jr.)	53	Garret Jansen (Jr.)
DE	**40**	**Parker Hesse (Sr.)**	94	A.J. Epenesa (So.)
OLB	49	Nick Niemann (So.)	35	Barrington Wade (So.)
MLB	34	Kristian Welch (Jr.)	48	Jack Hockaday (Sr.)
WLB	52	Amani Jones (Jr)	31	Aaron Mends (Sr.)
CB	8	Matt Hankins (So.)	3	Trey Creamer (Fr.)
CB	11	Michael Ojemudia (Jr.)	**5**	**Manny Rugamba (Jr.)**
SS	27	Amani Hooker (Jr.)	18	John Milani (Jr.)
FS	37	Brandon Snyder (Sr.)	**30**	**Jake Gervase (Sr.)**
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	91	Miguel Recinos (Sr.)	**KR**	6 Ihmir Smith-Marsette (So.)
P	2	Ryan Gersonde (So.)	**PR**	19 Max Cooper (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Nate Stanley, 351-196-2,437-6, 26 TDs
Rushing: Toren Young, 45 att., 193 yds., 2 TDs
Receiving: Nick Easley, 51 rec., 530 yds., 4 TDs
Tackles: Jake Gervase, 58
Sacks: Anthony Nelson, 7.5
Interceptions: Jake Gervase, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Kirk Ferentz
Record at School: 143-97 (19 years)
Career Record: 155-118 (22 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Brian Ferentz
Defensive Coordinator: Phil Parker
Iowa City, IA • Kinnick Stadium (70,585)

Tom Lynn

Minnesota **Golden Gophers**

National Forecast: **73** • Big Ten West Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **6-6, 3-6 Big Ten**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug. 30	New Mexico State
Sept. 8	Fresno State
Sept. 15	Miami (Ohio)
Sept. 22	at Maryland
Oct. 6	Iowa
Oct. 13	at Ohio State
Oct. 20	at Nebraska
Oct. 26	Indiana
Nov. 3	at Illinois
Nov. 10	Purdue
Nov. 17	Northwestern
Nov. 24	at Wisconsin

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 2-7 BIG TEN

Aug. 31	Buffalo	W	17-7
Sept. 9	at Oregon State	W	48-14
Sept. 16	Middle Tennessee	W	34-3
Sept. 30	Maryland	L	24-31
Oct. 7	at Purdue	L	17-31
Oct. 14	Michigan State	L	27-30
Oct. 21	Illinois	W	24-17
Oct. 28	at Iowa	L	10-17
Nov. 4	at Michigan	L	10-33
Nov. 11	Nebraska	W	54-21
Nov. 18	at Northwestern	L	0-39
Nov. 25	Wisconsin	L	0-31

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Curtis Dunlap Jr., OG, Jacksonville, FL
2. Daniel Faalele, OT, Melbourne, Australia
3. Rashod Bateman, WR, Tifton, GA
4. Vic Viramontes, QB, Riverside, CA*
5. Alex Reigelsperger, DE, Dayton, OH
6. Elijah Teague, DT, South Holland, IL
7. Nolan Edmonds, RB, Alpharetta, GA
8. Jason Dickson, OT, Corona, CA
9. Jornell Manns, WR, Mansfield, OH
10. Terell Smith, CB, Snellville, GA

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG TEN	NATIONAL
Scoring	22.1 ppg	12	108
Rushing	182.4 ypg	3	46
Passing	126.1 ypg	13	122
Total	308.5 ypg	12	123
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	22.8 ppg	9	36
Rushing	172.2 ypg	10	74
Passing	174.5 ypg	3	11
Total	346.7 ypg	7	30
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
0	0.00	9	64

STAT CORNER

4.3

Minnesota drives got off to a slow start. The Gophers averaged just 4.3 yards per play on first down in 2017, worst in the Big Ten and second worst in FBS.

OFFENSE Minnesota's run-pass option offense struggled in its first season under coach P.J. Fleck, scoring 22.1 points per game (108th in the nation). The Gophers were especially bad in the passing game, averaging only 126.1 yards per game (122nd). The lack of consistent quarterback play was the primary reason for the struggles, and they abandoned the air attack altogether in some games.

Minnesota restarts in 2018 with a new, inexperienced duo — sophomore junior college transfer Vic Viramontes and redshirt freshman Tanner Morgan. Neither has attempted a pass at the FBS level. Like last season, Fleck will wait until late in fall camp to name a starter, and given their lack of experience, both could play early in the year like Conor Rhoda and Demry Croft did in 2017.

The Gophers' stable of quality running backs is down to one known commodity — senior Rodney Smith, who is 1,260 all-purpose yards away from breaking the school record. Fellow tailback Shannon Brooks injured his leg in offseason workouts and will miss the 2018 season. Receiver Tyler Johnson led the team in all categories, and an ensemble needs to emerge around him.

The offensive line is building depth and added a couple of behemoth recruits from IMG (Fla.) Academy who could play as freshmen — tackle Daniel Faalele, 6'9" and 400 pounds, and guard Curtis Dunlap, the smaller one at 6'5" and 370.

DEFENSE The Gophers' 4-3 defense was the better unit in 2017, allowing 22.8 points per game (36th in the country), and they were even better against the pass, giving up 174.5 yards (11th). The defense will be led by a trio of players — junior defensive end Carter Coughlin, who had team highs in sacks and tackles for a loss a year ago; junior linebacker Thomas Barber, who had a team-high 115 tackles; and junior safety Antoine Winfield Jr., who is a welcome returnee after missing most of last year with a hamstring injury.

The Gophers need to have some new defensive tackles step up, with eyes primarily on Alabama transfer O.J. Smith. The Gophers have struggled to get to the quarterback in non-blitz situations, and they hired a pass-rush specialist in coach Marcus West to help fix the issue. Freshman defensive end Esezi Otomewo and sophomore cornerback Kiondre Thomas are prime candidates to emerge this season.

SPECIALISTS Emmit Carpenter, the 2016 Big Ten Kicker of the Year, will look to rebound after making only 14-of-20 field goals in 2017. Capable punter Jacob Herbers replaces Ryan Santoso. The Gophers will look for help in the return game in preseason camp.

FINAL ANALYSIS For the third time in four seasons, Minnesota figures to enter November still in search of an elusive sixth win — and bowl eligibility. A year ago, in Fleck's first season at Minnesota, the Gophers lacked depth and talent and finished at 5–7, including 2–7 in the Big Ten. It marked the first time Minnesota had missed a bowl since 2011.

"The outside people are going to say, 'What about your wins?'" Fleck said during the spring. "Again, I'm not worried about all that. I'm not worried one bit about any of the wins and losses. I'm worried about developing this football team."

Fleck, who took Western Michigan from 1–11 to 8–5 in Year 2 in Kalamazoo, received a one-year rollover contract extension at Minnesota during last season and now has five years remaining to build the program in his image.



RODNEY SMITH

"I know P.J. Fleck rubs some people the wrong way with that rah-rah stuff, but it's genuine. He's a positive energy, positive thoughts guy."

— An opposing Big Ten assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	**6**	**Tyler Johnson (Jr.)**	8	Mark Williams (So.)	
WR	3	Chris Autman-Bell (Fr.)	82	Demetrius Douglas (So.)	
WR	13	Rashod Bateman (Fr.)	**25**	**Phillip Howard (So.)**	
LT	**73**	**Donnell Greene (Sr.)**	72	Jason Dickson (Jr.)	
LG	**64**	**Conner Olson (So.)**	77	Blaise Andries (Fr.)	
C	62	Jared Weyler (Sr.)	60	John Michael Schmitz (Fr.)	
RG	61	Bronson Dovich (Jr.)	51	Curtis Dunlap (Fr.)	
RT	**70**	**Sam Schlueter (So.)**	78	Daniel Faalele (Fr.)	
TE	42	Ko Kieft (So.)	13	Brevyn Spann-Ford (Fr.)	
QB	2	Tanner Morgan (Fr.)	7	Vic Viramontes (So.)	
RB	**1**	**Rodney Smith (Sr.)**	23	Nolan Edmonds (Fr.)	

DEFENSE (7)

DE	**45**	**Carter Coughlin (Jr.)**	5	Trenton Guthrie (Fr.)
DT	19	Gary Moore (Sr.)	**87**	**Nate Umlor (So.)**
DT	99	O.J. Smith (Sr.)	52	Elijah Teague (Fr.)
DE	95	Esezi Otomewo (Fr.)	46	Winston DeLattiboudere (Jr.)
OLB	**21**	**Kamal Martin (Jr.)**	28	Braelen Oliver (Fr.)
MLB	**41**	**Thomas Barber (Jr.)**	43	Bailey Schoenfelder (So.)
OLB	36	Blake Cashman (Sr.)	20	Julian Huff (Sr.)
CB	**34**	**Antonio Shenault (Sr.)**	17	Rey Estes (Fr.)
CB	31	Kiondre Thomas (So.)	16	Coney Durr (Jr.)
S	**11**	**Antoine Winfield (Jr.)**	10	Josh Aune (Fr.)
S	**2**	**Jacob Huff (Sr.)**	23	Adam Beck (Fr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	38	Emmit Carpenter (Sr.)	**KR**	1	Rodney Smith (Sr.)
P	47	Jacob Herbers (Jr.)	**PR**	34	Antonio Shenault (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: None
Rushing: Rodney Smith, 229 att., 977 yds., 3 TDs
Receiving: Tyler Johnson, 35 rec., 677 yds., 7 TDs
Tackles: Thomas Barber, 115
Sacks: Carter Coughlin, 6.5
Interceptions: Jacob Huff, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: P.J. Fleck
Record at School: 5-7 (1 year)
Career Record: 35-29 (5 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Kirk Ciarrocca
Defensive Coordinator: Robb Smith
Minneapolis, MN • TCF Bank Stadium (50,805)

Getty Images

Nebraska Cornhuskers

National Forecast: **62** • Big Ten West Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **6-6, 3-6 Big Ten**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Akron
Sept.	8	Colorado
Sept.	15	Troy
Sept.	22	at Michigan
Sept.	29	Purdue
Oct.	6	at Wisconsin
Oct.	13	at Northwestern
Oct.	20	Minnesota
Nov.	3	at Ohio State
Nov.	10	Illinois
Nov.	17	Michigan State
Nov.	23	at Iowa

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 4-8, 3-6 BIG TEN

Sept.	2	Arkansas State	W	43-36
Sept.	9	at Oregon	L	35-42
Sept.	16	Northern Illinois	L	17-21
Sept.	23	Rutgers	W	27-17
Sept.	29	at Illinois	W	28-6
Oct.	7	Wisconsin	L	17-38
Oct.	14	Ohio State	L	14-56
Oct.	28	at Purdue	W	25-24
Nov.	4	Northwestern	(ot) L	24-31
Nov.	11	at Minnesota	L	21-54
Nov.	18	at Penn State	L	44-56
Nov.	24	Iowa	L	14-56

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Adrian Martinez, QB, Fresno, CA
2. Cameron Jurgens, TE, Beatrice, NE
3. Maurice Washington, RB, Stockton, CA
4. Cam'ron Jones, S, Mansfield, TX
5. Tate Wildeman, DE, Parker, CO
6. Caleb Tannor, OLB, Stone Mountain, GA
7. C.J. Smith, S, West Palm Beach, FL
8. Dominick Watt, WR, Hollywood, FL
9. Jaron Woodyard, WR, Gaithersburg, MD*
10. Greg Bell, RB, Chula Vista, CA*

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG TEN	NATIONAL
Scoring	25.8 ppg	7	84
Rushing	107.5 ypg	13	120
Passing	277.5 ypg	2	27
Total	385.0 ypg	7	87
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	36.4 ppg	13	116
Rushing	214.8 ypg	13	115
Passing	221.4 ypg	11	60
Total	436.2 ypg	14	101
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
-7	-0.58	12	106

STAT CORNER

46.8

Nebraska opponents gained at least 5.0 yards on 46.8% of their carries, the second-worst percentage in FBS (ahead of only UNLV).

OFFENSE After the first spring practice, as reporters gathered and television cameras were set up, Scott Frost said: "Come on, pick it up, let's go, faster, faster, faster …"

The new Cornhuskers — Frost is old-school and prefers that to "Huskers" — coach was having fun, while underscoring a theme that will carry into the season on both sides of the ball. His team, reshaped by new strength and conditioning coach Zach Duval, will play (and practice) with tempo.

A young and inexperienced quarterback, likely redshirt freshman Tristan Gebbia, will direct the spread offense, behind a restructured, more aggressive line built around guards Jerald Foster and Tanner Farmer and tackle Brenden Jaimes, who has moved from the right to the left side.

Most notable on offense are receivers Stanley Morgan Jr. and JD Spielman. Morgan caught 61 passes for a school-record 986 yards and 10 touchdowns last season. Spielman will line up at times in the Duck-R position, a combination running back-receiver.

Nebraska had only 10 rushes of 20 or more yards last season. That should change.

DEFENSE Fifth-year seniors are playing under a third defensive coordinator, though the Cornhuskers will still line up in a 3-4 base. Coordinator Erik Chinander's "no fear of failure, let it loose" approach is in marked contrast to last season's bend-but-don't-break system, when Nebraska ranked at or near last in the Big Ten statistically in all defensive categories. Chinander places an emphasis on forcing turnovers, and his teams at UCF did just that — the Knights ranked second nationally with 32 takeaways last season and had 58 in 26 games during his two years in Orlando.

Nose tackle Mick Stoltenberg, a two-year starter, learned to deal with constant double-teams and is better suited for Chinander's system. Ben Stille has added 20 pounds of muscle and moved to end from outside linebacker, where he led the team with 3.5 sacks.

Dedrick Young, a three-year starter, has been reliable but not flashy at inside linebacker, where junior college transfer Will Honas will provide immediate help. A healthy Luke Gifford is a good fit at outside linebacker in the new system. The secondary played soft last season, according to defensive backs coach Travis Fisher, but no longer.

SPECIALISTS Punter Caleb Lightbourn returns, as does Spielman, the kickoff returner. But placekicker Drew Brown, a four-year starter and team leader, is a significant loss. Lightbourn averaged 42.1 yards per punt, an improvement from his freshman season. But punt returns have been a continuing concern; the Huskers ranked 86th nationally.

FINAL ANALYSIS Nebraska has been largely absent from the national discussion since 2001, and the Cornhuskers haven't won a conference championship since 1999. Without overstating things, Frost and staff were miracle workers at UCF, taking a program from 0–12 the season before they arrived to 13–0, including a Peach Bowl victory against Auburn, last year, their second in Orlando.

Whether they can work such magic in two seasons again is uncertain. Nebraska had better than 4–8 talent a year ago, and much of it returns. New systems are in place all the way around, causing growing pains, and the schedule is daunting. But the Cornhuskers will be up-tempo, aggressive, physical — and competitive.



TRE BRYANT

"I like the rah-rah attitude from the first day (Scott Frost) got there. But the reality is they're not that good on the offensive and defensive lines."

— An opposing Big Ten assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	8	**Stanley Morgan Jr. (Sr.)**	4	Jaevon McQuitty (Fr.)
WR	1	Tyjon Lindsey (So.)	19	Mike Williams (Jr.)
WR	10	JD Spielman (So.)		Miles Jones (Fr.)
LT	76	**Brenden Jaimes (So.)**	65	Christian Gaylord (Jr.)
LG	67	**Jerald Foster (Sr.)**	50	John Raridon (So.)
C	79	Michael Decker (Jr.)	62	**Cole Conrad (Sr.)**
RG	63	**Tanner Farmer (Sr.)**	56	Boe Wilson (So.)
RT	71	Matt Farniok (So.)	68	Will Farniok (Fr.)
TE	86	Jack Stoll (So.)	11	Austin Allen (Fr.)
QB	14	Tristan Gebbia (Fr.)	2	Adrian Martinez (Fr.)
RB	18	Tre Bryant (Jr.)	25	Greg Bell (Jr.)

DEFENSE (7)

DE	96	**Carlos Davis (Jr.)**	95	Ben Stille (So.)
NT	44	**Mick Stoltenberg (Sr.)**	93	Damion Daniels (Fr.)
DE	91	**Freedom Akinmoladun (Sr.)**	94	Khalil Davis (Jr.)
OLB	12	**Luke Gifford (Sr.)**	32	Pernell Jefferson (So.)
ILB	5	**Dedrick Young (Sr.)**	7	Mohamed Barry (Jr.)
ILB	3	Will Honas (Jr.)	14	Avery Roberts (So.)
OLB	22	Alex Davis (Jr.)	43	Tyrin Ferguson (Jr.)
CB	21	**Lamar Jackson (Jr.)**	6	Eric Lee Jr. (Jr.)
CB	23	Dicaprio Bootle (So.)	16	Ethan Cox (Fr.)
S	24	**Aaron Williams (Sr.)**	19	Marquel Dismuke (So.)
S	25	Antonio Reed (Sr.)	41	Deontai Williams (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	32	Barret Pickering (Fr.)	KR	10	JD Spielman (So.)
P	35	Caleb Lightbourn (Jr.)	PR		Miles Jones (Fr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: None
Rushing: Devine Ozigbo, 129 att., 493 yds., 3 TDs
Receiving: Stanley Morgan Jr., 61 rec., 986 yds., 10 TDs
Tackles: Dedrick Young II, 80
Sacks: Ben Stille, 3.5
Interceptions: Aaron Williams, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Scott Frost
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: 19-7 (2 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Troy Walters
Defensive Coordinator: Erik Chinander
Lincoln, NE • Memorial Stadium (85,458)

Tim Umphrey

Northwestern **Wildcats**

National Forecast: **46** • Big Ten West Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **6-6, 4-5 Big Ten**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	at Purdue
Sept.	8	Duke
Sept.	15	Akron
Sept.	29	Michigan
Oct.	6	at Michigan State
Oct.	13	Nebraska
Oct.	20	at Rutgers
Oct.	27	Wisconsin
Nov.	3	Notre Dame
Nov.	10	at Iowa
Nov.	17	at Minnesota
Nov.	24	at Illinois

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 10-3, 7-2 BIG TEN

Sept.	2	Nevada	W	31-20
Sept.	9	at Duke	L	17-41
Sept.	16	Bowling Green	W	49-7
Sept.	30	at Wisconsin	L	24-33
Oct.	7	Penn State	L	7-31
Oct.	14	at Maryland	W	37-21
Oct.	21	Iowa	(ot) W	17-10
Oct.	28	Michigan State	(ot) W	39-31
Nov.	4	at Nebraska	(ot) W	31-24
Nov.	11	Purdue	W	23-13
Nov.	18	Minnesota	W	39-0
Nov.	25	at Illinois	W	42-7
Dec.	29	vs. Kentucky #	W	24-23

#Music City Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Devin O'Rourke, DE, Mokena, IL
2. Andrew Leota, DE, Asheville, NC
3. Khalid Jones, ILB, Duncan, SC
4. Wyatt Blake, OG, Crystal Lake, IL
5. Greg Newsome II, CB, Chicago, IL
6. Isaiah Bowser, RB, Sidney, OH
7. Jason Whittaker, QB, Rockford, MI
8. Jeremiah McDonald, S, Slidell, LA
9. Jacob Jefferson, WR, Houston, TX
10. Payne He'Bert, OT, Pearland, TX

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG TEN	NATIONAL
Offense	Per Game	BIG TEN	National
Scoring	29.2 ppg	4	56
Rushing	174.2 ypg	5	52
Passing	233.8 ypg	6	64
Total	408.0 ypg	4	55
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	20.1 ppg	7	20
Rushing	107.7 ypg	4	9
Passing	249.5 ypg	14	101
Total	357.2 ypg	8	34
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
+7	+0.54	2	26

STAT CORNER

20.1

The Cats' havoc rate (combined TFLs, forced fumbles and passes defensed dived by total defensive plays) was 20.1%, 10th in FBS.

OFFENSE Northwestern hopes a veteran-laden line and more competitive depth at the skill positions will offset the loss of a program great and the uncertainty surrounding quarterback Clayton Thorson's health. Coming off of an ACL tear in Northwestern's bowl game, Thorson hopes to return for the Aug. 30 opener at Purdue. But the team has been preparing three others to play: junior TJ Green, sophomore Aidan Smith and redshirt freshman Andrew Marty.

"We've thrown a lot at them, a ton at them, and we have not backed off of any of it," offensive coordinator Mick McCall says. "Are they still making mistakes? Absolutely. But it's not so much that we have to back off. We've got to go under the assumption that [Thorson doesn't play]. We think he's going to [play], but I don't know."

Pat Fitzgerald's team knows it will be without all-time leading rusher Justin Jackson. Jeremy Larkin averaged 6.0 yards per carry as Jackson's backup in 2017, and he brings a big-play threat to a backfield that has lacked it at times. Wide receiver is gradually becoming a solid group, as top targets Bennett Skowronek and Flynn Nagel both return.

Fitzgerald challenged an underperforming offensive line before and during the 2017 season, and after he got solid results down the stretch, expectations are high for a group that returns four starters, including promising sophomore tackle Rashawn Slater.

DEFENSE There's star power in this unit as Northwestern boasts All-Big Ten candidates at all three levels of the defense. Junior Joe Gaziano and sophomore Samdup Miller form one of the nation's best young pass-rushing tandems after combining for 14.5 sacks and 16 quarterback hurries last fall. Although space-eater Tyler Lancaster will be missed, senior Jordan Thompson leads a deep group of tackles hoping to maintain Northwestern's excellence against the run.

Depth at linebacker isn't ideal, but Paddy Fisher and Nate Hall both should be among the league's best. Fisher's four forced fumbles tied for the Big Ten lead, while Hall led Northwestern with 16.5 tackles for a loss to go with two interceptions and 5.0 sacks. Along with Blake Gallagher and Nathan Fox, Northwestern has four proven options but needs others to emerge.

Cornerback Montre Hartage enters his third season as a starter and is on the radar of NFL teams. He leads a secondary that must replace two talented safeties. The return of several players from injury (juniors Trae Williams, Alonzo Mayo and Roderick Campbell are healthy) can help.

SPECIALISTS The Wildcats found their placekicker in sophomore Charlie Kuhbander, who now needs to extend his range (only two of his 13 field goals last fall were beyond 39 yards). A new punter is needed, but Northwestern gets a big boost with the return of kick returner Solomon Vault from injury. Vault has four career kick return touchdowns.

FINAL ANALYSIS With 27 wins in the last three seasons and a new lakefront facility, Northwestern clearly has momentum. Keeping it likely depends on Thorson, who, if healthy, can take the Wildcats a long way. But his uncertain status and key losses at running back, safety and defensive tackle increase the degree of difficulty. Northwestern needs line play to excel and for its star power on defense to shine again. Although the schedule is tough, Northwestern misses both Ohio State and Penn State and gets almost all of its marquee opponents at home.



CLAYTON THORSON

"The key to the season will be the health of Clayton Thorson. Smart kid, big arm, loves to compete. But first he has to get healthy."

— An opposing Big Ten assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	**88**	**Ben Skowronek (Jr.)**	15	Jace James (So.)
WR	**2**	**Flynn Nagel (Sr.)**	6	Jelani Roberts (Sr.)
WR	4	Solomon Vault (Sr.)	19	Riley Lees (So.)
LT	**72**	**Blake Hance (Sr.)**	73	Gunnar Vogel (So.)
LG	**59**	**J.B. Butler (Sr.)**	79	Trey Klock (Jr.)
C	65	Jared Thomas (Jr.)	52	Sam Gerak (Fr.)
RG	**71**	**Tommy Doles (Sr.)**	57	Cam Kolwich (So.)
RT	**70**	**Rashawn Slater (So.)**	76	Ethan Wiederkehr (Fr.)
TE	84	Cam Green (Jr.)	80	Trey Pugh (So.)
QB	**18**	**Clayton Thorson (Sr.)**	10	TJ Green (Jr.)
RB	28	Jeremy Larkin (So.)	20	John Moten IV (Jr.)

DEFENSE (6)

DE	**91**	**Samdup Miller (So.)**	98	Earnest Brown IV (So.)
DT	95	Alex Miller (Jr.)	92	Fred Wyatt (Sr.)
DT	**99**	**Jordan Thompson (Sr.)**	75	Ben Oxley (Sr.)
DE	**97**	**Joe Gaziano (Jr.)**	54	Trent Goens (Jr.)
OLB	**32**	**Nate Hall (Sr.)**	49	Chris Bergin (So.)
MLB	**42**	**Paddy Fisher (So.)**	50	Jango Glackin (So.)
OLB	51	Blake Gallagher (So.)	45	Nathan Fox (Jr.)
CB	3	Trae Williams (Jr.)	10	Alonzo Mayo (Jr.)
CB	**24**	**Montre Hartage (Sr.)**	9	Roderick Campbell (Jr.)
S	13	JR Pace (So.)	7	Travis Whillock (So.)
S	41	Jared McGee (Sr.)	26	Brian Bullock (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	14	Charlie Kuhbander (So.)	**KR**	4	Solomon Vault (Sr.)
P	17	Daniel Kubiuk (Sr.)	**PR**	19	Riley Lees (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Clayton Thorson, 434-262-2,844-12, 15 TDs
Rushing: Jeremy Larkin, 84 att., 503 yds., 5 TDs
Receiving: Flynn Nagel, 48 rec., 489 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Paddy Fisher, 113
Sacks: Joe Gaziano, 9.0
Interceptions: Montre Hartage, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Pat Fitzgerald
Record at School: 87-65 (12 years)
Career Record: 87-65 (12 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Mick McCall
Defensive Coordinator: Mike Hankwitz
Evanston, IL • Ryan Field (47,130)

Margaret Bowles

Purdue Boilermakers

National Forecast: **45** • Big Ten West Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **7-5, 5-4 Big Ten**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	Northwestern
Sept.	8	Eastern Michigan
Sept.	15	Missouri
Sept.	22	Boston College
Sept.	29	at Nebraska
Oct.	13	at Illinois
Oct.	20	Ohio State
Oct.	27	at Michigan State
Nov.	3	Iowa
Nov.	10	at Minnesota
Nov.	17	Wisconsin
Nov.	24	at Indiana

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 4-5 BIG TEN

Sept.	2	vs. Louisville #	L	28-35
Sept.	8	Ohio	W	44-21
Sept.	16	at Missouri	W	35-3
Sept.	23	Michigan	L	10-28
Oct.	7	Minnesota	W	31-17
Oct.	14	at Wisconsin	L	9-17
Oct.	21	at Rutgers	L	12-14
Oct.	28	Nebraska	L	24-25
Nov.	4	Illinois	W	29-10
Nov.	11	at Northwestern	L	13-23
Nov.	18	at Iowa	W	24-15
Nov.	25	Indiana	W	31-24
Dec.	27	vs. Arizona %	W	38-35

#Indianapolis %Foster Farms Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Rondale Moore, WR, New Albany, IN
2. Amad Anderson, ATH, Staten Island, NY
3. Kory Taylor, WR, Hilliard, OH
4. Jack Plummer, QB, Gilbert, AZ
5. Jimmy McKenna, OT, Avon, OH
6. Will Bramel, OT, Danville, KY
7. Jaylan Alexander, ILB, River Grove, IL
8. Ja'Qurius Smith, OLB, Lakeland, FL
9. Cory Trice, S, Hopkinsville, KY
10. KJ Stokes, DE, Millbrook, AL

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG TEN	NATIONAL
Scoring	25.2 ppg	8	91
Rushing	151.5 ypg	9	83
Passing	251.5 ypg	5	46
Total	403.1 ypg	5	61
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	20.5 ppg	8	24
Rushing	132.9 ypg	7	29
Passing	242.5 ypg	13	94
Total	375.5 ypg	10	52
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
+4	+0.31	6	40

STAT CORNER

-7.1

Based on fumble recovery and interception rates, Purdue's expected turnover margin was minus-7.1. Actual margin: plus-4.

OFFENSE Jeff Brohm arrived at Purdue as a heralded offensive guru. In Year 2, he'll have several returning pieces to get closer to his offensive goals, but also plenty of question marks.

Both of Purdue's quarterbacks are recovering from significant injuries. Junior Elijah Sindelar played the last three-and-a-half games on a torn ACL. Meanwhile, David Blough's season ended with a dislocated ankle on Nov. 4. Sindelar is a prototypical drop-back passer with a 6'4" frame and the strong arm of former pitcher who hit mid-90s. At 6'1", Blough gets by on experience and veteran savvy to make plays with his feet. Both could see playing time again this year.

Running back is the deepest position group on the team, with a variety of different body types and running styles. Markell Jones, Tario Fuller, D.J. Knox and Richie Worship should all get plenty of carries.

Purdue struggled to find reliable receivers last year. Under-recruited and undersized sophomore Jackson Anthrop is a sure-handed target. But for Purdue to field a big-play offense, others will need to emerge. Incoming freshman Rondale Moore is the most highly touted Purdue recruit in years and will eventually become a featured piece of the offense. Tight ends Cole Herdman and Brycen Hopkins are reliable pass-catching targets, but not overpowering blockers.

The offensive line, led by senior center Kirk Barron, returns four starters.

DEFENSE Defensive coordinator Nick Holt sparked a dramatic transformation in his first year at Purdue. The Boilermakers jumped from 117th in scoring defense in 2016 to 24th in 2017. Holt's hybrid 4-3 system is built to stop the run, a perfect fit in the smash-mouth Big Ten. The challenge for Purdue will be to replicate some of that success after losing eight players who saw significant action.

Junior linebacker Markus Bailey played out of position at Sam linebacker last year as a means to get the best 11 players on the field. He still racked up the second-most tackles (89). He'll return to his natural position at Mike linebacker this year, where he'll be the clear leader of the defense.

The front seven was the strength of the team last year but will be the biggest question mark. Defensive tackle Lorenzo Neal will anchor a new-look line.

The secondary, even though it's replacing both corners, could be better. Physical redshirt freshman Kenneth Major could start alongside fellow freshman Dedrick Mackey. However, they're also going to have to cover longer considering so many pieces are gone from the front seven. Senior safety Jacob Thieneman, a former walk-on, earned a starting role largely because he was smart enough to quarterback the defense.

SPECIALISTS Punter Joe Schopper was a high school safety and four-time state champion at Cathedral in Indianapolis. He showed his athleticism, converting four successful fake punts last season (two passes, one run, one by penalty). Placekicker Spencer Evans has an incredibly strong leg. He recorded 35 touchbacks and is looking to win the field goal job outright.

FINAL ANALYSIS Last year was supposed to be a rebuilding year. Brohm exceeded those expectations by leading Purdue to its first bowl win since 2011. Veteran defensive leaders keyed the turnaround last year. Now, with so many of those players gone, the pressure is on the offense. Purdue could take a step back in Year 2 before it takes two steps forward in Year 3.



MARKELL JONES

"This is Exhibit A of how the right coach can change everything. That program was a joke the last couple of years. Now look. What a job by Jeff (Brohm)."

— An opposing Big Ten assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)

WR	7	Isaac Zico (Sr.)	12	Jared Sparks (So.)	
WR	33	**Jackson Anthrop (So.)**		Rondale Moore (Fr.)	
WR	9	Terry Wright (Sr.)	18	KeyRon Catlett (So.)	
LT	78	**Grant Hermanns (So.)**	60	**Eric Swingler (Sr.)**	
LG	75	**Shane Evans (Sr.)**	55	Michael Mendez (Jr.)	
C	53	**Kirk Barron (Sr.)**	56	Viktor Beach (Fr.)	
RG	50	Bearooz Yacoobi (Sr.)	71	Sam Loebig (So.)	
RT	79	**Matt McCann (Jr.)**	76	Mark Stickford (Fr.)	
TE	88	**Cole Herdman (Sr.)**	89	Brycen Hopkins (Jr.)	
QB	11	David Blough (Sr.)	2	**Elijah Sindelar (Jr.)**	
RB	8	Markell Jones (Sr.)	25	Tario Fuller (Jr.)	

DEFENSE (4)

DE	92	Giovanni Reviere (Fr.)	47	Jeff Marks (Fr.)	
DT	44	Antony Watts (So.)	96	Ray Ellis (Sr.)	
DT	9	**Lorenzo Neal (Jr.)**	66	Alex Criddle (Jr.)	
LEO	98	Kai Higgins (Jr.)	94	Robert McWilliams (Fr.)	
SLB	30	Tobias Larry (So.)	5	T.J. Jallow (Sr.)	
MLB	21	**Markus Bailey (Jr.)**	39	Zach Randall (Fr.)	
WLB	55	Derrick Barnes (So.)	46	Cornel Jones (So.)	
CB	1	Dedrick Mackey (Fr.)	24	Tim Cason (Sr.)	
CB	20	Kenneth Major (Fr.)	3	Kamal Hardy (Sr.)	
SS	41	**Jacob Thieneman (Sr.)**	38	Brennan Thieneman (So.)	
FS	27	**Navon Mosley (Jr.)**	14	Antonio Blackmon (Sr.)	

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	13	Spencer Evans (Sr.)	KR	1	D.J. Knox (Sr.)
P	31	Joe Schopper (Sr.)	PR	33	Jackson Anthrop (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Elijah Sindelar, 329-187-2,099-7, 18 TDs
Rushing: Markell Jones, 113 att., 566 yds., 1 TD
Receiving: Jackson Anthrop, 47 rec., 423 yds., 5 TDs
Tackles: Markus Bailey, 89
Sacks: Markus Bailey, 7.0
Interceptions: Jacob Thieneman, Navon Mosley, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Jeff Brohm
Record at School: 7-6 (1 year)
Career Record: 37-16 (4 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Brian Brohm, JaMarcus Shephard
Defensive Coordinators: Nick Holt, Anthony Poindexter
West Lafayette, IN • Ross-Ade Stadium (57,236)

AP

Wisconsin Badgers

National Forecast: **9** • Big West Ten Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **10-3, 7-2 Big Ten**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Western Kentucky
Sept.	8	New Mexico
Sept.	15	BYU
Sept.	22	at Iowa
Oct.	6	Nebraska
Oct.	13	at Michigan
Oct.	20	Illinois
Oct.	27	at Northwestern
Nov.	3	Rutgers
Nov.	10	at Penn State
Nov.	17	at Purdue
Nov.	24	Minnesota

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 13-1, 9-0 BIG TEN

Sept.	1	Utah State	W	59-10
Sept.	9	Florida Atlantic	W	31-14
Sept.	16	at BYU	W	40-6
Sept.	30	Northwestern	W	33-24
Oct.	7	at Nebraska	W	38-17
Oct.	14	Purdue	W	17-9
Oct.	21	Maryland	W	38-13
Oct.	28	at Illinois	W	24-10
Nov.	4	at Indiana	W	45-17
Nov.	11	Iowa	W	38-14
Nov.	18	Michigan	W	24-10
Nov.	25	at Minnesota	W	31-0
Dec.	2	vs. Ohio State #	L	21-27
Dec.	30	vs. Miami %	W	34-24

#Indianapolis %Orange Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Jack Sanborn, ILB, Lake Zurich, IL
2. Nakia Watson, RB, Austin, TX
3. Aron Cruickshank, ATH, Brooklyn, NY
4. Boyd Dietzen, DE, Combined Locks, WI
5. Travian Blaylock, CB, Humble, TX
6. Donte Burton, CB, Loganville, GA
7. Cormac Sampson, DE, Eau Claire, WI
8. Reggie Pearson, S, Inkster, MI
9. Jaylan Franklin, ATH, Brownstown, MI
10. Isaiah Mullens, DE, Columbus, OH

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	BIG TEN	NATIONAL
Scoring	33.8 ppg	3	28
Rushing	222.9 ypg	2	23
Passing	192.1 ypg	8	92
Total	415.0 ypg	3	51
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	13.9 ppg	1	3
Rushing	98.4 ypg	2	3
Passing	163.6 ypg	2	5
Total	262.1 ypg	1	2
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**BIG TEN**	**NATIONAL**
+5	+0.36	4	3

STAT CORNER

+1.77

Wisconsin averaged 4.93 points per trip inside the opponent's 40 and allowed 3.16. That plus-1.77 margin ranked second in FBS.

OFFENSE Ten of the 11 starters from the Orange Bowl are back on what could be an explosive unit. This figures to be Wisconsin's most lethal offense since Russell Wilson, Montee Ball and Co. helped the Badgers average a program-record 44.1 points per game in 2011.

Leading the way is tailback Jonathan Taylor, who finished sixth in the Heisman Trophy voting after rushing for 1,977 yards and 13 touchdowns as a freshman.

The Badgers have a go-to receiver in Quintez Cephus, who led the team with six touchdown receptions despite missing the final five games of the season with a right leg injury. A silver lining to the Cephus injury was that it gave A.J. Taylor, Danny Davis and Kendric Pryor a chance to shine in his absence, and all three helped pick up the slack in the passing game. The return of all four players gives Wisconsin quality and quantity at the wide receiver spot, which should help make up for the loss of Troy Fumagalli at tight end.

All five starters return on the line, though that group likely will look different this season. Fourth-year starter Michael Deiter played last season at left tackle, but he'll likely move back inside to left guard. Who takes over at left tackle remains to be seen, but there are options in a group that has legitimate depth.

Of course, the true potential of the unit falls on the left arm of one player. Quarterback Alex Hornibrook needs to lower his interception total — he had 15 last season — but he ended his sophomore campaign in style by throwing for 258 yards and four touchdowns in the Orange Bowl.

DEFENSE The Badgers must replace eight starters, but they're strong up the middle with nose tackle Olive Sagapolu, inside linebackers T.J. Edwards and Ryan Connelly, and strong safety D'Cota Dixon returning.

Finding playmakers on the edge will be the biggest challenge for Jim Leonhard, who is back for his second season at defensive coordinator. Andrew Van Ginkel is a pass-rushing menace who appears poised to step into a full-time role, but finding a reliable starter at the other outside linebacker spot is crucial.

Depth at defensive end has been a luxury the past few seasons, but Wisconsin was hit hard by graduation at that spot. While Isaiahh Loudermilk and Garrett Rand are ready for expanded roles, the Badgers need to bring along some young players as backups.

And yet the biggest question mark is in the back end, particularly at cornerback. Nick Nelson and Derrick Tindal gave Wisconsin two solid cover men in 2017. Now, it's up to a group that includes Dontye Carriere-Williams, Madison Cone, Faion Hicks and Donte Burton to make sure the pass defense remains a strength.

SPECIALISTS After missing all but three games in 2016 with a back injury, Rafael Gaglianone bounced back to make 16 of his 18 field goal attempts as a junior. Punter Anthony Lotti improved as a sophomore, but the Badgers still ranked near the bottom of the Big Ten in net average.

FINAL ANALYSIS The defense has been the star for the first three years of the Paul Chryst era, a stretch that includes 34 wins. Now, the Badgers might have to light up the scoreboard if they're going to make a run at the Big Ten title. A light non-conference schedule should give the defense a chance to grow, but that group needs to be ready for a Big Ten slate that includes road games against five bowl teams from a year ago.



JONATHAN TAYLOR

"I loved watching these guys play last year. A team that looked like it was having fun every time they stepped on the field. That's a reflection on Paul Chryst."

— An opposing Big Ten assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (10)

WR	**87**	**Quintez Cephus (Jr.)**	6	Danny Davis (So.)	
WR	4	A.J. Taylor (Jr.)	3	Kendric Pryor (So.)	
LT	71	Cole Van Lanen (So.)	65	Tyler Beach (Fr.)	
LG	**63**	**Michael Deiter (Sr.)**	**67**	**Jon Dietzen (Jr.)**	
C	**61**	**Tyler Biadasz (So.)**	76	Kayden Lyles (Fr.)	
RG	**66**	**Beau Benzschawel (Sr.)**	78	Jason Erdmann (Jr.)	
RT	**79**	**David Edwards (Jr.)**	62	Patrick Kasl (So.)	
TE	**85**	**Zander Neuville (Sr.)**	**49**	**Kyle Penniston (Jr.)**	
QB	**12**	**Alex Hornibrook (Jr.)**	17	Jack Coan (So.)	
RB	**23**	**Jonathan Taylor (So.)**	7	Bradrick Shaw (Jr.)	
FB	45	Alec Ingold (Sr.)	32	Jake Collinsworth (Fr.)	

DEFENSE (3)

DE	97	Isaiahh Loudermilk (So.)	52	David Pfaff (Jr.)
NT	**99**	**Olive Sagapolu (Sr.)**	91	Bryson Williams (Fr.)
DE	93	Garrett Rand (Jr.)	95	Keldric Preston (So.)
OLB	17	Andrew Van Ginkel (Sr.)	59	Tyler Johnson (Jr.)
ILB	**53**	**T.J. Edwards (Sr.)**	47	Griffin Grady (So.)
ILB	43	Ryan Connelly (Sr.)	54	Chris Orr (Jr.)
OLB	56	Zack Baun (Jr.)	55	Christian Bell (So.)
CB	29	Dontye Carriere-Williams (So.)	4	Donte Burton (Fr.)
CB	31	Madison Cone (So.)	20	Faion Hicks (Fr.)
FS	25	Scott Nelson (Fr.)	26	Eric Burrell (So.)
SS	**14**	**D'Cota Dixon (Sr.)**	2	Patrick Johnson (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	27	Rafael Gaglianone (Sr.)	**KR**	11	Aron Cruickshank (Fr.)
P	15	Anthony Lotti (Jr.)	**PR**	4	A.J. Taylor (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Alex Hornibrook, 318-198-2,644-15, 25 TDs
Rushing: Jonathan Taylor, 299 att., 1,977 yds., 13 TDs
Receiving: A.J. Taylor, 31 rec., 475 yds., 5 TDs
Tackles: Ryan Connelly, 88
Sacks: Andrew Van Ginkel, 6.5
Interceptions: T.J. Edwards, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Paul Chryst
Record at School: 34-7 (3 years)
Career Record: 53-26 (6 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Joe Rudolph
Defensive Coordinator: Jim Leonhard
Madison, WI • Camp Randall Stadium (80,321)

Tom Lynn

CONFERENCE USA PREVIEW

East	Predicted Order of Finish	West



1 FAU **OWLS** 11-2, 7-1 C-USA



2 MARSHALL **THUNDERING HERD** 8-4, 6-2 C-USA



3 MTSU **BLUE RAIDERS** 7-5, 6-2 C-USA



4 OLD DOMINION **MONARCHS** 6-6, 3-5 C-USA



5 FIU **PANTHERS** 5-7, 3-5 C-USA



6 WKU **HILLTOPPERS** 4-8, 2-6 C-USA



7 CHARLOTTE **49ERS** 2-10, 1-7 C-USA

1 NORTH TEXAS **MEAN GREEN** 8-5, 6-2 C-USA



2 LOUISIANA TECH **BULLDOGS** 8-4, 6-2 C-USA



3 UAB **BLAZERS** 8-4, 6-2 C-USA



4 SOUTHERN MISS **GOLDEN EAGLES** 7-5, 5-3 C-USA



5 UTSA **ROADRUNNERS** 5-7, 4-4 C-USA



6 RICE **OWLS** 2-11, 1-7 C-USA



7 UTEP **MINERS** 1-11, 0-8 C-USA



Conference USA Championship: **FAU over North Texas**

GAMES TO WATCH

SEPT. 1
FAU AT OKLAHOMA
Lane Kiffin and the Owls will be on the national stage in Week 1 against an OU team that will be playing its first game in the post-Baker Mayfield era.

SEPT. 8
BAYLOR AT UTSA
The Roadrunners opened the 2017 season with a stunning 17–10 win at Baylor. Now, the Bears must make the trip to the Alamodome.

SEPT. 15
NORTH TEXAS AT ARKANSAS
New Arkansas coach Chad Morris is familiar with Mean Green quarterback Mason Fine, who threw for 424 yards in a loss to Morris' SMU team last fall.

SEPT. 22
NC STATE AT MARSHALL
Marshall plays host to a Power 5 team for the third time in four seasons. The Herd beat Purdue in 2015 and lost to Louisville in '16.

SEPT. 29
LA. TECH AT NORTH TEXAS
North Texas' one-point win in Ruston last November was a springboard to the school's first Conference USA West title.

OCT. 20
FAU AT MARSHALL
FAU is perhaps the most talented team in the league, but the Owls' road slate is brutal. At least this trip to Huntington comes after a bye week.

North Texas: Getty; WKU: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; FIU: Samuel Lewis/ ImageReflex; La. Tech: Tom Morris/LATechSportsPix.com; UAB: Zach Bland/For UAB Athletics; Charlotte: Sam Roberts/Freeze Frame; UTSA: Jeff Huehn. All others courtesy of each school's athletic department

2018 Unit Rankings

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
CHARLOTTE	10	12	13	10	13	10	13
FAU	5	1	1	1	1	1	1
FIU	9	6	9	7	8	6	12
LOUISIANA TECH	3	10	4	3	3	11	5
MARSHALL	7	4	3	2	2	2	2
MTSU	2	7	7	6	5	3	6
NORTH TEXAS	1	5	2	9	9	7	8
OLD DOMINION	8	3	6	8	6	9	10
RICE	14	13	14	14	11	14	14
SOUTHERN MISS	6	8	10	5	10	4	11
UAB	4	2	5	4	7	8	3
UTEP	13	14	12	11	14	13	9
UTSA	12	9	11	13	4	5	7
WKU	11	11	8	12	12	12	4

Recruiting by School

1. FIU
2. Marshall
3. Louisiana tech
4. FAU
5. WKU
6. Southern Miss
7. UTSA
8. North Texas
9. MTSU
10. UAB
11. Charlotte
12. Rice
13. ODU
14. UTEP


MASON FINE, NORTH TEXAS


DEVIN SINGLETARY, FAU

2018 Bowl Projections

Bahamas Bowl: FAU vs. Memphis
Heart of Dallas Bowl: North Texas vs. Minnesota
Independence Bowl: Louisiana Tech vs. Georgia Tech
Boca Raton Bowl: MTSU vs. Ohio
Hawaii Bowl: Marshall vs. Utah State
New Orleans Bowl: UAB vs. Louisiana
New Mexico Bowl: Southern Miss vs. Wyoming

C-USA Coordinator Carousel

Charlotte: Offense
New: Shane Montgomery
Old: Greg Adkins

Charlotte: Defense
New: Glenn Spencer, Chip West
Old: Matt Wallerstedt

FAU: Offense
New: Charlie Weis Jr.
Old: Kendal Briles

FAU: Defense
New: Tony Pecoraro
Old: Chris Kiffin

Marshall: Offense
New: Tim Cramsey, Todd Goebbel
Old: Todd Goebbel, Bill Legg

Marshall: Defense
New: Adam Fuller
Old: Chuck Heater

Rice: Offense
New: Jerry Mack
Old: Billy Lynch

Rice: Defense
New: Brian Smith
Old: Brian Stewart

Southern Miss: Defense
New: Tim Billings, Derek Nicholson
Old: Tony Pecoraro

UAB: Offense
New: Bryant Vincent
Old: Les Koenning

UTEP: Offense
New: Mike Canales
Old: Brian Natkin

UTEP: Defense
New: Mike Cox
Old: Tom Mason

UTSA: Offense
New: Al Borges
Old: Frank Scelfo

UTSA: Defense
New: Jason Rollins
Old: Pete Golding

OCT. 20
NORTH TEXAS AT UAB
Bill Clark has UAB among the elite in the league in the Blazers' second season back in action. This will be a critical game in the division race.

OCT. 27
LOUISIANA TECH AT FAU
Three of Louisiana Tech's four league losses came by seven points or fewer last season. Don't be surprised if the Bulldogs contend in 2018.

NOV. 3
FAU AT FIU
Lane Kiffin wasn't the only first-year coach in South Florida to engineer a turnaround. Butch Davis guided FIU to its first bowl game since 2011.

NOV. 3
WKU AT MTSU
This regional rivalry dates back to the days when both teams were in the Division I-AA ranks. Western Kentucky has won three straight in the series.

NOV. 10
WKU AT FAU
The Hilltoppers lost five of their final six games last season; it all started with a 42–28 loss at home to FAU in late October.

NOV. 17
FAU AT NORTH TEXAS
FAU rolled up 1,437 yards and 110 points in its two wins over North Texas in 2017 — 69–31 in the regular season and 41–17 in the C-USA title game.


BRENT STOCKSTILL, MTSU

C-USA Returning Leaders

Passing	ATT	COMP	INT	PCT	YDS	TD	AVG/G
Mason Fine, North Texas	511	324	63.4	4,052	31	15	289.4
J'Mar Smith, Louisiana Tech	409	229	56.0	2,974	16	5	228.8
Brent Stockstill, MTSU	239	138	57.7	1,672	16	8	209.0

Rushing	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Devin Singletary, FAU	301	1,920	6.4	32	70	137.1
Spencer Brown, UAB	250	1,329	5.3	10	51	102.2
Tyler King, Marshall	158	820	5.2	7	90	74.6

Receiving	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Tyre Brady, Marshall	62	942	15.2	8	76	85.6
Ty Lee, MTSU	79	955	12.1	5	63	73.5
Teddy Veal, Louisiana Tech	74	950	12.8	7	44	73.1

Tackles: Azeez Al-Shaair, FAU (147); Chase Hancock, Marshall (128)
Sacks: Oshane Ximines, Old Dominion (8.5); Khalil Brooks, MTSU (7.5)
Interceptions: Jalen Young, FAU (7); Amik Robertson, Louisiana Tech (5)

2017 C-USA Standings

EAST	C-USA	OVERALL	WEST	C-USA	OVERALL
Florida Atlantic	8-0	11-3	North Texas	7-1	9-5
Florida Intl	5-3	8-5	UAB	6-2	8-5
Marshall	4-4	8-5	Southern Miss	6-2	8-5
WKU	4-4	6-7	Louisiana Tech	4-4	7-6
MTSU	4-4	7-6	UTSA	3-5	6-5
Old Dominion	3-5	5-7	Rice	1-7	1-11
Charlotte	1-7	1-11	UTEP	0-8	0-12

2017 Bowl Results

New Orleans Bowl: Troy 50, North Texas 30
Cure Bowl: Georgia State 27, Western Kentucky 17
New Mexico Bowl: Marshall 31, Colorado State 28
Camellia Bowl: MTSU 35, Arkansas State 30
Boca Raton Bowl: FAU 50, Akron 3
Frisco Bowl: Louisiana Tech 51, SMU 10
Gasparilla Bowl: Temple 28, FIU 3
Bahamas Bowl: Ohio 41, UAB 6
Independence Bowl: Florida State 42, Southern Miss 13

2017 C-USA TEAM STATS & RANKINGS

OFFENSE

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
CHARLOTTE	14.2 (13)	166.3 (7)	136.9 (13)	303.2 (13)
FAU	40.6 (1)	285.3 (1)	213.1 (8)	498.4 (1)
FIU	25.6 (7)	159.2 (10)	233.2 (6)	392.3 (7)
LOUISIANA TECH	30.5 (3)	172.5 (6)	230.5 (7)	403.0 (4)
MARSHALL	26.7 (6)	140.2 (12)	239.6 (5)	379.8 (9)
MTSU	25.5 (8)	142.3 (11)	251.1 (3)	393.4 (6)
NORTH TEXAS	35.5 (2)	162.9 (9)	291.9 (2)	454.7 (2)
OLD DOMINION	20.7 (11)	163.9 (8)	168.4 (11)	332.3 (11)
RICE	16.3 (12)	187.0 (2)	144.8 (12)	331.8 (12)
SOUTHERN MISS	29.2 (4)	184.5 (4)	240.1 (4)	424.6 (3)
UAB	27.8 (5)	183.2 (5)	180.5 (10)	363.8 (10)
UTEP	11.8 (14)	95.6 (13)	134.9 (14)	230.5 (14)
UTSA	23.5 (10)	184.6 (3)	202.8 (9)	387.4 (8)
WKU	25.5 (9)	60.9 (14)	335.0 (1)	395.8 (5)

DEFENSE

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
CHARLOTTE	32.8 (11)	205.8 (13)	248.8 (14)	454.6 (14)
FAU	22.7 (3)	158.9 (5)	230.7 (11)	389.6 (8)
FIU	28.5 (9)	171.3 (7)	243.6 (13)	414.9 (9)
LOUISIANA TECH	25.4 (6)	176.6 (9)	208.9 (5)	385.5 (7)
MARSHALL	19.9 (2)	121.2 (1)	220.5 (7)	341.7 (3)
MTSU	24.7 (5)	134.1 (3)	223.2 (8)	357.3 (4)
NORTH TEXAS	35.0 (12)	197.8 (11)	228.9 (10)	426.7 (11)
OLD DOMINION	31.7 (10)	204.2 (12)	223.5 (9)	427.7 (12)
RICE	35.8 (13)	192.6 (10)	233.3 (12)	425.8 (10)
SOUTHERN MISS	24.5 (4)	138.5 (4)	193.5 (3)	331.9 (2)
UAB	25.6 (7)	175.9 (8)	189.7 (2)	365.6 (5)
UTEP	36.8 (14)	234.3 (14)	212.3 (6)	446.6 (13)
UTSA	17.0 (1)	127.7 (2)	160.1 (1)	287.8 (1)
WKU	26.8 (8)	170.3 (6)	206.8 (4)	377.2 (6)

ALL-C-USA TEAM

First-Team Offense

QB	**Mason Fine**	5-11	180	Jr.	North Texas
RB	**Spencer Brown**	6-0	235	So.	UAB
RB	**Devin Singletary**	5-9	200	Jr.	FAU
AP	**Ty Lee**	5-9	175	Jr.	MTSU
WR	**Tyre Brady**	6-3	201	Sr.	Marshall
WR	**Teddy Veal**	6-0	189	Sr.	Louisiana Tech
TE	**Harrison Bryant**	6-5	225	Jr.	FAU
C	**Levi Brown**	6-2	220	Jr.	Marshall
OL	**Reggie Bain**	6-4	300	Sr.	FAU
OL	**Chandler Brewer**	6-6	312	Sr.	MTSU
OL	**James Davis**	6-2	300	Sr.	UAB
OL	**O'Shea Dugas**	6-5	339	Sr.	Louisiana Tech


SPENCER BROWN, UAB


TYLER KING, MARSHALL

First-Team Defense

DL	**Ryan Bee**	6-7	282	Sr.	Marshall
DL	**Jaylon Ferguson**	6-5	269	Sr.	Louisiana Tech
DL	**Miles Fox**	6-1	292	Sr.	Old Dominion
DL	**Oshane Ximines**	6-3	247	Sr.	Old Dominion
LB	**Azeez Al-Shaair**	6-2	228	Sr.	FAU
LB	**Chase Hancock**	6-2	221	Sr.	Marshall
LB	**Josiah Tauaefa**	6-1	240	Jr.	UTSA
CB	**Shelton Lewis**	6-0	185	Sr.	FAU
CB	**Amik Robertson**	5-9	172	So.	Louisiana Tech
S	**Malik Gant**	6-2	194	Jr.	Marshall
S	**Jalen Young**	5-11	185	Sr.	FAU

First-Team Specialists

K	**Parker Shaunfield**	6-0	170	Sr.	Southern Miss
P	**Jack Fox**	6-2	215	Sr.	Rice
KR	**Isaiah Harper**	5-9	168	Sr.	Old Dominion
PR	**Darrell Brown**	5-9	174	Jr.	Old Dominion

SECOND-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Brent Stockstill**	6-1	197	Sr.	MTSU
RB	**Jeremy Cox**	5-11	217	Sr.	Old Dominion
RB	**Tyler King**	5-11	193	So.	Marshall
AP	**Willie Wright**	5-8	155	So.	FAU
WR	**Jalen Guyton**	6-1	208	Jr.	North Texas
WR	**Andre Wilson**	5-9	179	Sr.	UAB
TE	**Kelvin Smith**	6-2	252	Jr.	North Texas
C	**Nick Clarke**	6-4	312	Sr.	Old Dominion
OL	**Nate Davis**	6-3	311	Sr.	Charlotte
OL	**Ty Pollard**	6-6	315	Jr.	Southern Miss
OL	**Ethan Reed**	6-4	297	Jr.	Louisiana Tech
OL	**Elex Woodworth**	6-4	286	Jr.	North Texas

SECOND-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Anthony Johnson**	6-3	291	Sr.	FIU
DL	**Hunter Snyder**	6-7	260	Sr.	FAU
DL	**Kevin Strong**	6-4	295	Sr.	UTSA
DL	**Roderick Young**	6-1	297	Sr.	North Texas
LB	**Khalil Brooks**	5-11	203	Jr.	MTSU
LB	**Fermin Silva**	6-2	234	Sr.	FIU
LB	**Rashad Smith**	6-2	210	Jr.	FAU
CB	**Chris Jackson**	6-0	179	Jr.	Marshall
CB	**Nik Needham**	6-0	190	Sr.	UTEP
S	**Jovante Moffatt**	6-0	200	Sr.	MTSU
S	**Broderick Thomas**	6-1	195	Sr.	UAB

SECOND-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Jared Sackett**	6-1	180	So.	UTSA
P	**Yannis Routsas**	6-3	205	Sr.	UTSA
KR	**Keion Davis**	6-1	213	Sr.	Marshall
PR	**Andre Wilson**	5-9	179	Sr.	UAB


J'Mar Smith
Louisiana Tech


Lucky Jackson
WKU


Nik Needham
UTEP


Ben DeLuca
Charlotte

THIRD-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**J'Mar Smith**	6-1	230	Jr.	Louisiana Tech
RB	**Jalen Rhodes**	5-9	200	Sr.	UTSA
RB	**Nic Smith**	5-10	186	So.	North Texas
AP	**Austin Walter**	5-8	200	Sr.	Rice
WR	**Jonathan Duhart**	6-3	220	Sr.	Old Dominion
WR	**Lucky Jackson**	6-1	185	Jr.	WKU
TE	**David Lucero**	6-5	235	Sr.	UTEP
C	**Sosaia Mose**	6-2	305	Jr.	North Texas
OL	**Dallas Connell**	6-3	283	Jr.	FIU
OL	**Carlos Johnson**	6-3	338	Sr.	MTSU
OL	**Brandon Walton**	6-5	300	Jr.	FAU
OL	**Isaac Weaver**	6-6	283	So.	Old Dominion

THIRD-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Jordan Bradford**	6-2	280	Sr.	Louisiana Tech
DL	**Walter Brady**	6-3	265	Sr.	MTSU
DL	**Garrett Marino**	6-2	285	Jr.	UAB
DL	**Roe Wilkins**	6-3	270	Jr.	Rice
LB	**E.J. Ejiya**	6-3	230	Sr.	North Texas
LB	**Jeff Gemmell**	6-3	234	Jr.	Charlotte
LB	**Dae'Von Washington**	5-10	215	Sr.	Louisiana Tech
CB	**Sean Carter**	6-1	205	Sr.	Old Dominion
CB	**DeAndre Farris**	5-10	190	Sr.	WKU
S	**Ben DeLuca**	6-1	201	Jr.	Charlotte
S	**Devon Key**	6-1	205	So.	WKU

THIRD-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Jose Borregales**	5-10	206	So.	FIU
P	**Stone Wilson**	5-10	180	Sr.	FIU
KR	**Kerrith Whyte**	5-10	200	Jr.	FAU
PR	**Jalen Young**	5-11	185	Sr.	FAU

Brown: Kamp Fender/UAB Athletics; DeLuca: Sam Roberts/Freeze Frame; Jackson: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; All others courtesy of each school's athletic department

Charlotte 49ers

National Forecast: **127** • C-USA East Prediction: **7** • Projected Record: **2-10, 1-7 C-USA**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Fordham
Sept.	8	Appalachian State
Sept.	15	Old Dominion
Sept.	22	at Massachusetts
Sept.	29	at UAB
Oct.	13	Western Kentucky
Oct.	20	at Middle Tennessee
Oct.	27	Southern Miss
Nov.	3	at Tennessee
Nov.	10	at Marshall
Nov.	17	FIU
Nov.	24	at Florida Atlantic

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 1-11, 1-7 C-USA

Sept.	1	Eastern Michigan	L	7-24
Sept.	9	at Kansas State	L	7-55
Sept.	16	North Carolina A&T	L	31-35
Sept.	23	Georgia State	L	0-28
Sept.	30	at FIU	L	29-30
Oct.	7	Marshall	L	3-14
Oct.	14	at Western Kentucky	L	14-45
Oct.	21	UAB	W	25-24
Nov.	4	at Old Dominion	L	0-6
Nov.	11	Middle Tennessee	L	21-35
Nov.	18	at Southern Miss	L	21-66
Nov.	25	Florida Atlantic	L	12-31

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Dantrell Barkley, DT, Kannapolis, NC*
2. Terrick Smalls, RB, Savannah, GA
3. Justin Jeffery, WR, Richmond Hill, GA
4. Emmanuel White, DE, Huntersville, NC
5. Chris Wiggins, WR, Greensboro, NC
6. Tyler Ringwood, WR, Buffalo, NY*
7. Moss Saccomanno, TE, Smiths Station, AL*
8. Markees Watts, OLB, Lancaster, SC
9. Brady Pope, QB, Statesville, NC
10. Matt Martinez, CB, Mooresville, NC

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	14.2 ppg	13	128
Rushing	166.3 ypg	7	64
Passing	136.9 ypg	13	120
Total	303.2 ypg	13	124
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	32.8 ppg	11	103
Rushing	205.8 ypg	13	107
Passing	248.8 ypg	14	100
Total	454.6 ypg	14	111
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
-9	-0.75	11	116

STAT CORNER

10.5

Charlotte's havoc rate (combined tackles for a loss, forced fumbles and passes defensed per play) was 10.5%, third worst in FBS.

OFFENSE After his team notched one win and finished near the bottom of Conference USA in points and yards, coach Brad Lambert opted to shake up his offensive staff. He brought in a new coordinator in Shane Montgomery — a familiar name to area football fans thanks to his stint as a standout quarterback at NC State in the late 1980s — and a new offensive line coach in former Tulane head coach Chris Scelfo.

Montgomery looks to install a pro-style offense that will be a departure from the spread look that gave dual-threat quarterback Hasaan Klugh room to rush for 532 yards last season. Klugh, a senior who's started the past two seasons, could end up being an odd fit for the new scheme. And with several contenders for the starting gig — including grad transfer Evan Shirreffs from Miami (Fla.) — the quarterback job could be unsettled heading into the fall.

"One of the things I think we need to improve on is being more efficient throwing the ball and having that balance," Lambert says.

The quarterback who eventually wins the job will have the luxury of playing behind an experienced offensive line that returns four starters. Running back Benny LeMay returns after rushing for a team-high 732 yards last season. There are some experienced weapons in the passing game with seniors Mark Quattlebaum and R.J. Tyler back, but the 49ers will look to younger players to make an impact.

DEFENSE Much like on the offensive side, the 49ers defense will have to adjust to a new system as former Oklahoma State assistant Glenn Spencer takes over as the defensive coordinator. He will likely incorporate more of a 4-3 scheme.

Spencer will have plenty to work with as linebacker Jeff Gemmell and safety Ben DeLuca return after logging more than 100 tackles apiece last season. Senior end Zach Duncan is back after leading the team with three sacks in 2017. He'll be joined by 2016 Conference USA All-Freshman selection Tyriq Harris, who had 4.5 tackles for a loss last season.

In all, 10 starters return from a defense that struggled at times. "We have a lot of core guys back on defense, so I expect us to play better on defense and create more turnovers," Lambert says. "We played well in spots last year, but the one area where we've got to get better is third-down efficiency. We've got to get ourselves off the field."

SPECIALISTS Placekicking was a sore spot last season as the 49ers' kickers converted only 4-of-13 field goal attempts and missed three extra points. True freshman Jonathan Cruz is considered the most promising candidate to solve the issues. Meanwhile, junior Jackson VanSickle and sophomore Kyle Corbett are among a crowded field of contenders to replace solid punter Arthur Hart. Running back Aaron McAllister is the only player coming back who saw meaningful action in the return game last season.

FINAL ANALYSIS In just its sixth season, Charlotte is still a relatively young football program. But in the wake of last season's program-worst 1–11 campaign, it was time to take an honest look at where things stood, leading to an overhaul of the coaching staff. Lambert has been the only coach the 49ers have known, and with some encouraging seasons early in the program's history, he has built some equity. But with a new athletics director taking the reins this year, it'll be important to show serious improvement in order to avoid more changes.



BEN DELUCA

"This is probably it for Brad Lambert to prove his plan can work. They made really great coordinator hires and overhauled the staff."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)				
WR	10	Cameron Bent (Fr.)	9	Victor Tucker (Fr.)
WR	6	Workpeh Kofa (Sr.)	82	Zach Gemmell (Fr.)
WR	3	**Mark Quattlebaum (Sr.)**	89	Chris Tomberlin (Jr.)
LT	71	**Cameron Clark (Jr.)**	51	Chris Brown (Sr.)
LG	51	**Chris Brown (Sr.)**	53	Jalen Allen (Sr.)
C	60	**Darren Drake (Sr.)**	68	Jaelin Fisher (So.)
RG	64	**Nate Davis (Sr.)**	78	Trevor Stacy (Jr.)
RT	94	Jamar Winston (Sr.)	73	David Foust (Sr.)
TE	8	**R.J. Tyler (Sr.)**	80	Ben Jacques (Jr.)
QB	7	**Hasaan Klugh (Sr.)**		Evan Shirreffs (Sr.)
RB	32	**Benny LeMay (Jr.)**	5	Aaron McAllister (So.)
DEFENSE (10)				
DE	13	**Zach Duncan (Sr.)**	14	Michael Holmes (Jr.)
NT	62	**Tyler Fain (Sr.)**	98	Timmy Horne (So.)
DT	90	**Tommy Doctor (Jr.)**	61	Ernest King (Fr.)
DE	10	**Tyriq Harris (Jr.)**	5	Alex Highsmith ((Jr.)
LB	21	**Juwan Foggie (Sr.)**	25	Darius Irvin (Jr.)
LB	34	**Jeff Gemmell (Jr.)**	52	Cam Darley (Sr.)
LB	7	**Anthony Butler (Jr.)**	56	Will Graham (So.)
CB	9	Quinton Jordan (Sr.)	6	Denzel Irvin (Sr.)
CB	36	**Robert Cheatem (So.)**	15	Marquavis Gibbs (Jr.)
SS	2	**Ed Rolle (Sr.)**	22	JT Starr (So.)
FS	28	**Ben DeLuca (Jr.)**	41	AJ McDonald (Jr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K		Jonathan Cruz (Fr.)	**KR**	5 Aaron McAllister (So.)
P	18	Jackson VanSickle (Jr.)	**PR**	5 Aaron McAllister (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Hasaan Klugh, 279-133-1,524-13, 10 TDs
Rushing: Benny LeMay, 137 att., 732 yds., 2 TDs
Receiving: Mark Quattlebaum, 31 rec., 343 yds., 1 TD
Tackles: Jeff Gemmell, 106
Sacks: Zach Duncan, 3.0
Interceptions: Juwan Foggie, Ed Rolle, 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Brad Lambert
Record at School: 17-41 (5 years)
Career Record: 17-41 (5 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Shane Montgomery
Defensive Coordinators: Glenn Spencer, Chip West
Charlotte, NC • Jerry Richardson Stadium (15,314)

Sam Roberts/Charlotte Athletics

Florida Atlantic **Owls**

National Forecast: **29** • C-USA East Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **11-2, 7-1 C-USA**



DEVIN SINGLETARY

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at Oklahoma
Sept.	8	Air Force
Sept.	15	Bethune-Cookman
Sept.	22	at UCF
Sept.	29	at Middle Tennessee
Oct.	6	Old Dominion
Oct.	20	at Marshall
Oct.	27	Louisiana Tech
Nov.	3	at FIU
Nov.	10	Western Kentucky
Nov.	17	at North Texas
Nov.	24	Charlotte

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 11-3, 8-0 C-USA

Sept.	1	Navy	L	19-42
Sept.	9	at Wisconsin	L	14-31
Sept.	16	Bethune-Cookman	W	45-0
Sept.	23	at Buffalo	L	31-34
Sept.	30	Middle Tennessee	W	38-20
Oct.	7	at Old Dominion	W	58-28
Oct.	21	North Texas	W	69-31
Oct.	28	at Western Kentucky	W	42-28
Nov.	3	Marshall	W	30-25
Nov.	11	at Louisiana Tech	W	48-23
Nov.	18	FIU	W	52-24
Nov.	25	at Charlotte	W	31-12
Dec.	2	North Texas #	W	41-17
Dec.	19	vs. Akron %	W	50-3

#C-USA Championship %Boca Raton Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Nero Nelson, WR, Hollandale, MS*
2. Marcel Southall, DT, Arlington, TX*
3. Charles Cameron, DT, Morton, MS*
4. Jaylen Joyner, DE, Orlando, FL
5. Devin Hayes, DE, Orlando, FL
6. Malcolm Davidson, RB, Kissimmee, FL
7. Cordel Littlejohn, QB, Lincolnton, NC
8. B.J. Emmons, RB, Morganton, NC
9. Doug Johnson, OT, Fort White, FL
10. Teja Young, ATH, West Palm Beach, FL

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	40.6 ppg	1	8
Rushing	285.3 ypg	1	6
Passing	213.1 ypg	8	80
Total	498.4 ypg	1	9
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	22.7 ppg	3	34
Rushing	158.9 ypg	5	57
Passing	230.7 ypg	11	74
Total	389.6 ypg	8	63
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
+13	+0.93	2	9

STAT CORNER

5.5

FAU averaged 5.5 points per trip inside the opponent's 40 in 2017, No. 1 in FBS. Devin Singletary was devastating in short yardage.

OFFENSE Never one to shy away from controversy, coach Lane Kiffin hired a 24-year-old, Charlie Weis Jr., to be the youngest offensive coordinator in modern college football history. Weis, now 25, replaces Kendal Briles, whose Baylor-style offense averaged 40.6 points last season at FAU — eighth best nationally. FAU's 2018 offense will combine some of the balance Kiffin and Weis utilized as Alabama assistants with Briles' ferociously up-tempo attack.

Option No. 1 will be Devin "Motor" Singletary. A dark-horse candidate for the Heisman Trophy, FAU's record-setting running back led the nation with 32 rushing touchdowns while stockpiling 1,920 rushing yards last season.

FAU's quarterback situation could remain fluid into the season. Former Florida State quarterback De'Andre Johnson, a fourth-year junior, played in one game last year before surgery to remove blood clots in his arm ended his season. Redshirt freshman Chris Robison is a former four-star recruit who originally enrolled at Oklahoma but was kicked out of school prior to the start of his freshman year.

A practice squad star last year, West Virginia transfer Jovon Durante joins Conference USA All-Freshman performer Willie Wright to give FAU two credible deep threats at receiver.

FAU lost three members from its interior offensive line to graduation, including All-Conference USA performers Antonyo Woods and Roman Fernandez. The addition of graduate transfer Junior Diaz from Tulane at center figures to smooth the transition.

DEFENSE FAU has a new coordinator on defense, too, hiring Tony Pecoraro away from C-USA rival Southern Miss. Pecoraro inherits a secondary that returns most of its starters for a defense that tied for second nationally with 20 interceptions. Where the Owls employed basic schemes defensively last season, rarely shifting from what was essentially a base 4-2-5, Pecoraro likes to disguise formations and blitz frequently.

Senior linebacker Azeez Al-Shaair underwent offseason surgery for the second consecutive year, this time on his elbow, and once again was limited in the spring. Missing spring didn't hurt him last season; he led the Owls with 147 tackles.

Safety Jalen Young, another senior, tied for second nationally with seven interceptions last season.

FAU lost defensive tackle Jeremiah Taleni to graduation but signed junior college transfer Charles Cameron, who will team with Steven Leggett, Hunter Snyder and Leighton McCarthy for what should be one of the fiercest pass-rush units in C-USA.

SPECIALISTS Placekicker Greg Joseph and punter Ryan Rickel both graduated, leaving FAU without obvious replacements. Vladimir Rivas served as their backup during 2017, but the Owls are bringing several walk-ons to camp in the fall. Young averaged 12.4 yards returning punts last season. Kerrith Whyte had the first kickoff return for a TD in program history.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Owls underwent numerous personnel changes during the offseason, both in the coaching staff and in some key offensive positions. That turnover will likely lead to inconsistent play to start the season. By the time C-USA play begins, however, there's no reason to believe that the Lane Train won't be chugging in high gear. At the very least, Kiffin's offensive mind should have FAU headed for its second consecutive bowl appearance.

"They've brought some great players in, but they lost a lot more than people are talking about. (Lane Kiffin) made it look easy, and it isn't."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)				
WR	7	Jovon Durante (Jr.)	82	Tavaris Harrison (Jr.)
WR	19	DeAndre McNeal (Sr.)		Nero Nelson (Jr.)
WR	86	**Willie Wright (So.)**		Desean Holmes (Jr.)
LT	58	**Reggie Bain (Sr.)**	51	Ean Biancardi (So.)
LG	60	BJ Etienne (So.)	63	Nick Weber (So.)
C		Junior Diaz (Sr.)	65	Tarrick Thomas (Jr.)
RG	65	Tarrick Thomas (Jr.)	66	Will Tuihalamaka (Jr.)
RT	73	**Brandon Walton (Jr.)**	76	Robert Hawkins (So.)
TE	40	**Harrison Bryant (Jr.)**	30	John Raine (Jr.)
QB	14	De'Andre Johnson (Jr.)	2	Chris Robison (So.)
RB	5	**Devin Singletary (Jr.)**	22	Tyrek Tisdale (So.)
DEFENSE (10)				
DE	94	**Hunter Snyder (Sr.)**	45	Tim Bonner (Jr.)
DT	56	**Steven Leggett (Sr.)**	42	William Davis (Jr.)
DT	98	Charles Cameron (Jr.)	48	Kevin McCrary (Jr.)
DE	13	**Leighton McCarthy (So.)**	95	Ernest Bagner (Sr.)
MLB	2	**Azeez Al-Shaair (Sr.)**	14	**Andrew Soroh (Sr.)**
OLB	7	**Rashad Smith (Jr.)**	49	Khantrell Burden (Sr.)
NB	21	**Herb Miller (Sr.)**	25	Quran Hafiz (So.)
CB	3	**Shelton Lewis (Sr.)**	37	James Pierre (So.)
CB	26	**Chris Tooley (Jr.)**	29	Korel Smith (So.)
SS	18	**Jalen Young (Sr.)**	6	Ahman Ross (So.)
FS	24	Zyon Gilbert (So.)	4	Ocie Rose (Sr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	44	Vladimir Rivas (Fr.)	KR	6 Kerrith Whyte (Jr.)
P	44	Vladimir Rivas (Fr.)	PR	18 Jalen Young (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Devin Singletary, 1-1-12-0, 0 TDs
Rushing: Devin Singletary, 301 att., 1,920 yds., 32 TDs
Receiving: Willie Wright, 56 rec., 657 yds., 6 TDs
Tackles: Azeez Al-Shaair, 147
Sacks: Rashad Smith, 6.0; Hunter Snyder, 6.0
Interceptions: Jalen Young, 7

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Lane Kiffin
Record at School: 11-3 (1 year)
Career Record: 46-24 (5+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Charlie Weis Jr.
Defensive Coordinator: Tony Pecoraro
Boca Raton, FL • FAU Stadium (29,495)

Courtesy FAU Athletics

FIU **Panthers**

National Forecast: **109** • C-USA East Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **5-7, 3-5 C-USA**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Indiana
Sept.	8	at Old Dominion
Sept.	15	Massachusetts
Sept.	22	at Miami
Sept.	29	Arkansas-Pine Bluff
Oct.	13	Middle Tennessee
Oct.	20	Rice
Oct.	27	at Western Kentucky
Nov.	3	Florida Atlantic
Nov.	10	at UTSA
Nov.	17	at Charlotte
Nov.	24	Marshall

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 5-3 C-USA

Aug.	31	at UCF	L	17-61
Sept.	8	vs. Alcorn State #	W	17-10
Sept.	23	at Rice	W	13-7
Sept.	30	Charlotte	W	30-29
Oct.	7	at Middle Tennessee	L	17-37
Oct.	14	Tulane	W	23-10
Oct.	28	at Marshall	W	41-30
Nov.	4	UTSA	W	14-7
Nov.	11	Old Dominion	L	30-37
Nov.	18	at Florida Atlantic	L	24-52
Nov.	24	Western Kentucky	W	41-17
Dec.	2	Massachusetts	W	63-45
Dec.	21	vs. Temple %	L	3-28

#Birmingham %Gasparilla Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Teair Tart, DT, West Philadelphia, PA*
2. Tayland Humphrey, DT, Spring, TX*
3. Jamal Anderson, S, Homestead, FL
4. Donovan Georges, ILB, Hialeah, FL
5. Ivan Thomas, HB, Miami, FL
6. Demarcus Townsend, RB, Naples, FL
7. Shaun Peterson Jr., OLB, Fort Lauderdale, FL
8. D'Antne Demery, OT, Brunswick, GA*
9. Joshua Sanders, DE, Waxahachie, TX
10. Zahir Turner, WR, Miami, FL

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	25.6 ppg	7	86
Rushing	159.2 ypg	10	72
Passing	233.2 ypg	6	66
Total	392.3 ypg	7	73
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	28.5 ppg	9	80
Rushing	171.3 ypg	7	72
Passing	243.6 ypg	13	96
Total	414.9 ypg	9	84
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
-3	-0.23	6	85

STAT CORNER

0-4

FIU was 0-4 in games in which it had a turnover margin of minus-2 or worse in 2017. The Panthers were 8-1 otherwise.

OFFENSE FIU has to replace its statistical leader at each skill position. Quarterback Alex McGough and running back Alex Gardner both exit the program after serving as four-year starters, and leading receiver Thomas Owens is also gone, leaving a number of sizable holes for the Panthers.

That is where the bad news ends, however. FIU coach Butch Davis has done an excellent job of recruiting and developing inherited talent, and both the running back and wide receiver positions return a lot of depth and skill, providing plenty of promise for 2018.

The offensive line features multiple returning starters, led by tackles Kai Absheer and Daquane Wilkie, which will help quarterback James Morgan — a graduate transfer from Bowling Green — stay upright. Morgan's top targets will include Florida transfer C.J. Worton, Austin Maloney and Bryce Singleton.

Running back is the deepest position on the team with Napoleon Maxwell and Shawndarrius Phillips joining D'vonte Price as guys who can tote the ball effectively. Maxwell averaged 5.9 yards per carry last season.

DEFENSE FIU will have to make significant strides to improve a pass defense that was especially vulnerable down the stretch. There will be some new life in the back end of the defense with young players moving in to take over for defensive backs who were experienced but not all that talented.

The Panthers lost their two top linebackers — Treyvon Williams and Anthony Wint — from the 2017 squad, so Davis has moved promising junior Sage Lewis from outside to inside linebacker while also moving standout end Fermin Silva to outside backer to get some of the team's best players on the field.

Davis was able to make these moves because he believes his defensive line is stocked with talent. Jordan Wood is a high-caliber transfer from Georgia Tech who will take the lead at defensive end, while the middle of the front will be strong with returnees Milord Juste and Anthony Johnson being joined by junior college transfers Teair Tart and Tayland Humphrey.

In short, the best way for the pass defense to get better is for the defensive line to dominate up front and limit available time for the opposition.

SPECIALISTS Special teams will be a strength of the Panthers and can be a viable weapon to flip field position and win games. Jose Borregales was one of the league's most consistent placekickers last season, connecting on 15-of-18 field goal attempts. He did not miss a kick inside 40 yards. Couple that production with punter Stone Wilson, who will look to improve his 41.0-yard average, and there are strong returning legs for the Panthers. Singleton burst onto the scene last fall as an electric kick returner.

FINAL ANALYSIS FIU was probably ahead of schedule in Davis' first season, posting a plus-.500 record in league play for the first time since going 5–3 in the Sun Belt in 2011. While it will be a difficult road to get back to eight wins — considering the losses at the skill positions and throughout the back end of the defense — if the young talent recruited by Davis can mature quickly, there is plenty of reason to believe that the Panthers can flirt with a winning record in 2017. FIU benefits from a schedule that features five of the first seven games at home, as well as key C-USA East rivals Florida Atlantic and Marshall coming to Riccardo Silva Stadium in November.



FERMIN SILVA

"They lose a lot. (QB) Alex McGough was great and didn't get the attention. Butch (Davis) is recruiting there like a coach should be, maybe for the first time at FIU."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (4)

WR	9	Bryce Singleton (So.)	14	Darrius Scott (Jr.)	
WR	15	Austin Maloney (Jr.)	16	Tony Gaiter IV (Jr.)	
WR	11	C.J. Worton (Jr)	19	Shermar Thornton (So.)	
LT	**65**	**Daquane Wilkie (Sr.)**	58	Devontay Taylor (So.)	
LG		D'Antne Demery (So.)	69	Chris Miller (Sr.)	
C	55	Shane McGough (So.)	**76**	**Neal Mars (Sr.)**	
RG	**60**	**Dallas Connell (Jr.)**	62	Mershawn Miller (Fr.)	
RT	**79**	**Kai Absheer (Sr.)**	64	Willa Pierre (Fr.)	
TE	87	Charlie Peterson (So.)	88	Sterling Palmer (Fr.)	
QB		James Morgan (Jr.)	8	Christian Alexander (Jr.)	
RB	23	Napoleon Maxwell (Sr.)	24	D'Vonte Price (So.)	

DEFENSE (4)

DE	90	Noah Curtis (So.)	94	Kevin Oliver (So.)
DT		Teair Tart (Jr.)	**46**	**Milord Juste (Sr.)**
DT	**91**	**Anthony Johnson (Sr.)**		Tayland Humphrey (Jr.)
DE	98	Jordan Wood (So.)		Jason Mercier (Fr.)
OLB	**7**	**Fermin Silva (Sr.)**	59	Jamal Gates (So.)
MLB	**47**	**Sage Lewis (Jr.)**	45	Rocky Jaques-Louis (Fr.)
OLB		Donovan Georges (Fr.)	44	Brandon James (So.)
CB	38	Richard Dames (So.)	20	Emmanuel Lubin (Sr.)
CB	13	Isaiah Brown (Jr.)	23	Khairi Reaser (Jr.)
S		Jamal Anderson (Fr.)	10	Olin Cushion III (Jr.)
S	36	Dorian Hall (Fr.)	10	Olin Cushion III (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	30	Jose Borregales (So.)	KR	9	Bryce Singleton (So.)
P	6	Stone Wilson (Sr.)	PR	16	Tony Gaiter IV (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Maurice Alexander, 39-18-174-2, 0 TDs
Rushing: Napoleon Maxwell, 81 att., 477 yds., 5 TDs
Receiving: Tony Gaiter, 34 rec., 314 yds., 1 TD
Tackles: Sage Lewis, 55
Sacks: Fermin Silva, Anthony Johnson, 7.0
Interceptions: Olin Cushion III, 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Butch Davis
Record at School: 8-5 (1 year)
Career Record: 87-48 (11 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Rich Skrosky
Defensive Coordinator: Brent Guy
Miami, FL • Riccardo Silva Stadium (20,000)

Samuel Lewis/FIU Athletics

Marshall **Thundering Herd**

National Forecast: **75** • C-USA East Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **8-4, 6-2 C-USA**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at Miami (Ohio)
Sept.	8	Eastern Kentucky
Sept.	15	at South Carolina
Sept.	22	NC State
Sept.	29	at Western Kentucky
Oct.	5	Middle Tennessee
Oct.	13	at Old Dominion
Oct.	20	Florida Atlantic
Nov.	3	at Southern Miss
Nov.	10	Charlotte
Nov.	17	UTSA
Nov.	24	at FIU

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 4-4 C-USA

Sept.	2	Miami (Ohio)	W	31-26
Sept.	9	at NC State	L	20-37
Sept.	16	Kent State	W	21-0
Sept.	30	at Cincinnati	W	38-21
Oct.	7	at Charlotte	W	14-3
Oct.	14	Old Dominion	W	35-3
Oct.	20	at Middle Tennessee	W	38-10
Oct.	28	FIU	L	30-41
Nov.	3	at Florida Atlantic	L	25-30
Nov.	11	Western Kentucky	W	30-23
Nov.	18	at UTSA	L	7-9
Nov.	25	Southern Miss	L	27-28
Dec.	16	vs. Colorado State #W		31-28

#New Mexico Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Jaquan Webb, WR, Oxford, MS
2. Arak McDuffie, DE, Louisville, KY
3. Corey Gammage, WR, Delray Beach, FL
4. Jalynn Sykes, RB, Rome, GA
5. Sharrod Frazier, OLB, Brunswick, GA
6. Steven Gilmore, CB, Rock Hill, SC
7. Patrick Keenan, DE, Tampa, FL
8. Aaron Morgan, DE, Opa Locka, FL
9. Kenny Wilkens, RB, Bedford, OH
10. Talik Keaton, WR, Sarasota, FL

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	26.7 ppg	6	79
Rushing	140.2 ypg	12	95
Passing	239.6 ypg	5	56
Total	379.8 ypg	9	92
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	19.9 ppg	2	17
Rushing	121.2 ypg	1	19
Passing	220.5 ypg	7	59
Total	341.7 ypg	3	28
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
-8	-0.62	9	111

STAT CORNER

+1.9

Based on fumble recovery and interception rates, Marshall's expected turnover margin was plus-1.9. Actual margin: minus-8.

OFFENSE Marshall coach Doc Holliday has plenty to be excited about with returning production numbers that don't come along very often. The Herd have 94.8 percent of their rushing yardage, 78.5 percent of their receiving yardage and the entire starting offensive line back.

However, Marshall features a new offensive coordinator in Tim Cramsey, who comes from Sam Houston State after leading the Bearkats to 7,500 yards and the FCS semifinals a year ago. The Herd also must find a new quarterback after three-year starter Chase Litton declared for the 2018 NFL Draft. The likely man to take over is graduate transfer Alex Thomson, a highly regarded prospect from Wagner. Thomson, who was limited to two games due to injury last year, threw for 2,436 yards and 16 touchdowns in 11 games in 2016.

The new quarterback enters an enviable situation with an offensive line that was fourth nationally in fewest sacks allowed last season. Wide receiver Tyre Brady offers Marshall one of the top returning receivers (942 yards, eight TDs) in Conference USA, and the running back tandem of Tyler King and Keion Davis accounted for 1,632 yards and 13 TDs last year.

DEFENSE Marshall's front seven will be among the best in Conference USA, and overall the defense returns nine starters from a unit that allowed just 19.9 points per game en route to eight wins last season. Adam Fuller moves over from linebackers coach to defensive coordinator, taking over for Chuck Heater, who took a job at Maryland.

Fuller's old position — the linebackers — will be the deepest on either side of the football with Chase Hancock (128 tackles, 9.5 TFLs, seven PBUs) returning to lead a group that also features seniors Artis Johnson and Frankie Hernandez, along with junior Omari Cobb and sophomore Jaquan Yulee. Donyae Moody, who tore an ACL last season, also adds to the linebacker depth. Former starting linebacker Juwon Young moves to defensive end to fill one of two positions lost to graduation while giving the Herd an explosive edge presence to go with interior forces Ryan Bee, Ty Tyler and Channing Hames.

If there is an area of moderate concern, it is the secondary, but there's still plenty of experience there with Chris Jackson and Jaylon McClain-Sapp at cornerback, and Malik Gant and Brandon Drayton at safety.

SPECIALISTS This is the X-factor for the Herd. Kicking specialist Kaare Vedvik handled all three phases in 2017 and helped Marshall win the field-position battle. With Vedvik gone, junior college transfer Justin Rohrwasser will handle the placekicking, while Robert Lefevre and Shane McDonough will battle for the punting duties. Expect Lefevre to handle kickoffs.

FINAL ANALYSIS Marshall has all the tools to challenge for a C-USA title. A difficult non-conference schedule that features a home date with NC State and a road contest at South Carolina will prepare the Herd for their conference slate, with the decisive game being an Oct. 20 Homecoming contest against defending C-USA champion Florida Atlantic.

Marshall's defense will keep the team in position to win plenty of games, so even at Cramsey's high-octane pace, the offense needs to take care of the ball and put the quarterback in position to be a game manager. If Marshall is able to limit turnovers and find suitable replacements for Vedvik in the kicking game, the Herd could have a special season in 2018.



TYLER KING

"They've been really great at how they recruit, how they handle non-qualifiers and evaluate talent. The defense is talented, maybe the best in the division."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)

WR	8	**Tyre Brady (Sr.)**	7	Obi Obialo (Jr.)	
WR	9	Marcel Williams (Sr.)	10	Nick Mathews (Sr.)	
WR	1	**Willie Johnson (So.)**		Artie Henry III (Jr.)	
LT	50	**Will Ulmer (So.)**	78	Alex Salguero (So.)	
LG	58	**Jordan Dowrey (Sr.)**	77	Alex Locklear (Jr.)	
C	61	**Levi Brown (Jr.)**	55	Alex Mollette (So.)	
RG	55	Alex Mollette (So.)	76	**Nathaniel Devers (Sr.)**	
RT	71	**Tarik Adams (So.)**	77	Alex Locklear (Jr.)	
TE	82	Cody Mitchell (So.)	15	Armani Levias (Jr.)	
QB		Alex Thomson (Sr.)	17	Isaiah Green (Fr.)	
RB	3	**Tyler King (So.)**	24	Keion Davis (Sr.)	

DEFENSE (9)

DE	4	**Juwon Young (Sr.)**	17	**Ty Tyler (Jr.)**
DT	91	**Ryan Bee (Sr.)**	51	Malik Thompson (Sr.)
DT	94	**Channing Hames (Jr.)**	17	Ty Tyler (Jr.)
DE	6	**Marquis Couch (Jr.)**		Koby Cumerlander (Fr.)
LB	10	Donyae Moody (Sr.)	31	Omari Cobb (Jr.)
LB	37	**Chase Hancock (Sr.)**	35	Frankie Hernandez (Sr.)
LB	21	**Artis Johnson (Sr.)**	2	Jaquan Yulee (So.)
CB	7	Jaylon McClain-Sapp (Jr.)	18	Dontrell Johnson (Sr.)
CB	3	**Chris Jackson (Jr.)**	27	Kereon Merrell (Sr.)
S	29	**Malik Gant (Jr.)**	23	Chad Clay (So.)
S	8	Brandon Drayton (So.)	13	Nazeeh Johnson (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	39	Justin Rohrwasser (Jr.)	KR	24	Keion Davis (Sr.)
P	43	Robert Lefevre (So.)	PR	9	Marcel Williams (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: None
Rushing: Tyler King, 158 att., 820 yds., 7 TDs
Receiving: Tyre Brady, 62 rec., 942 yds., 8 TDs
Tackles: Chase Hancock, 128
Sacks: Ryan Bee, 5.5
Interceptions: Chris Jackson, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Doc Holliday
Record at School: 61-42 (8 years)
Career Record: 61-42 (8 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Tim Cramsey, Todd Goebbel
Defensive Coordinator: Adam Fuller
Huntington, WV • Joan C. Edwards Stadium (38,016)

Marshall Athletics

MTSU Blue Raiders

National Forecast: **85** • C-USA East Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **7-5, 6-2 C-USA**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at Vanderbilt
Sept.	8	Tennessee-Martin
Sept.	15	at Georgia
Sept.	29	Florida Atlantic
Oct.	5	at Marshall
Oct.	13	at FIU
Oct.	20	Charlotte
Oct.	27	at Old Dominion
Nov.	2	Western Kentucky
Nov.	10	at UTEP
Nov.	17	at Kentucky
Nov.	24	UAB

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 4-4 C-USA

Sept.	2	Vanderbilt	L	6-28
Sept.	9	at Syracuse	W	30-23
Sept.	16	at Minnesota	L	3-34
Sept.	23	Bowling Green	W	24-13
Sept.	30	at Florida Atlantic	L	20-38
Oct.	7	FIU	W	37-17
Oct.	14	at UAB	L	23-25
Oct.	20	Marshall	L	10-38
Nov.	4	UTEP	W	30-3
Nov.	11	at Charlotte	W	35-21
Nov.	17	at Western Kentucky (ot)	L	38-41
Nov.	25	Old Dominion	W	41-10
Dec.	16	vs. Arkansas State #	W	35-30

#Camellia Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Jarek Campbell, LB, Murfreesboro, TN
2. Chris Stamps, CB, Vicksburg, MS*
3. Luke Shiflett, QB, Dalton, GA
4. Jordan Branch, DL, Maury City, TN
5. Marcus Greer, OG, Saint Louis, MO
6. Jahlil Ryles, OG, Phenix City, AL
7. Greg Grate Jr., DB, Miami, FL
8. Avery Jones, ILB, Anaheim Hills, CA*
9. Will Gilchrist, C, Pasadena, TX*
10. Matt Martin, C, Pasadena, TX*

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	25.5 ppg	8	87
Rushing	142.3 ypg	11	92
Passing	251.1 ypg	3	48
Total	393.4 ypg	6	71
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	24.7 ppg	5	46
Rushing	134.1 ypg	3	30
Passing	223.2 ypg	8	64
Total	357.3 ypg	4	35
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
-12	-0.92	13	122

STAT CORNER

6

Ty Lee was one of only six FBS receivers to combine at least 115 targets (he had 119) with a catch rate of 66% or more.

OFFENSE Keeping quarterback Brent Stockstill healthy is priority No. 1 for the Blue Raiders. He already is MTSU's all-time leading passer with 8,951 yards and 77 TDs, but he's missed nine games due to injuries over the past two seasons. And MTSU has no other quarterbacks with game experience on the roster, so there's potentially an enormous drop-off if Stockstill gets injured again.

Stockstill's top target will be Ty Lee, who led Conference USA with 79 catches last season. Patrick Smith and CJ Windham return as part of the rotation, but more wide receivers must join the mix to maximize Stockstill's final season. Speedy slot receiver Zack Dobson, one of the team's top-rated 2017 signees, has dynamic ability in the open field and should earn a role.

The line returns three starters, but there are questions about depth beyond that. The running back trio of bruiser Tavares Thomas, sure-handed Brad Anderson and big-play threat Terelle West has a high ceiling. They combined for 1,306 rushing yards and 47 receptions last season. MTSU should be among C-USA's most potent offenses, but it needs balance from the ground game to complement the passing attack.

DEFENSE The Blue Raiders made major improvements across the board in defensive coordinator Scott Shafer's first season. Year 2 carries plenty of promise with seven starters returning.

MTSU led C-USA in tackles for a loss last season, and much of that pressure is back. That includes edge-rushing linebacker Khalil Brooks (17 TFLs), former Missouri standout defensive end Walter Brady (team-high seven hurries), defensive tackle Malik Manciel (five TFLs) and some blitzing defensive backs.

Outside linebacker Darius Harris and strong safety Jovante Moffatt, a pair of seniors, are proven performers. Harris was the Camellia Bowl MVP, and he should provide guidance to budding redshirt freshman linebacker Cody Smith. Moffatt led the team with 101 tackles last season and anchors the secondary, which must develop more options at cornerback. Syracuse graduate transfer Cordell Hudson could help there.

The Blue Raiders must make major strides in takeaways after forcing only 11 turnovers in 13 games.

SPECIALISTS There are no concerns at punter, where Matt Bonadies returns to start a fourth season. Crews Holt should get the placekicker job after making his lone field goal attempt last season. The Blue Raiders must improve in kickoff coverage, as they allowed 26.4 yards per return last season, fifth worst in FBS.

FINAL ANALYSIS MTSU has not won a conference championship since sharing the Sun Belt title in coach Rick Stockstill's 2006 debut season. But the Blue Raiders have played in seven bowl games during that stretch, including the past three seasons. It's plausible to say that both trends could continue. But getting to bowl eligibility won't be an easy feat with non-conference games against SEC foes Vanderbilt, Georgia and Kentucky, and only five home games overall. Plus, two of MTSU's toughest C-USA games lead off its league schedule in a visit from Florida Atlantic and a trip to Marshall.

If the Blue Raiders can survive the first half of the schedule, they should collect wins in the back half. But again, keeping the younger Stockstill upright is paramount. MTSU is possibly a conference title contender with its senior QB behind center, but it likely posts a losing record without him.



BRENT STOCKSTILL

"Brent Stockstill coming back for another year at quarterback is huge for them. They were one team with him and a very bad team without him."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)					
WR	**8**	**Ty Lee (Jr.)**	86	Tavonn Salter (Sr.)	
WR	**37**	**Patrick Smith (Sr.)**	27	Ruben Garnett (Jr.)	
WR	83	Jimmy Marshall (So.)	34	Tyshawn Brown (Jr.)	
WR	**81**	**CJ Windham (Jr.)**	24	Zack Dobson (Fr.)	
LT	**55**	**Carlos Johnson (Sr.)**	68	Luke Harris (So.)	
LG	**74**	**Robert Behanan (Sr.)**	71	Angelo Owens (Sr.)	
C	72	Josh Fannin (Jr.)	53	Matt Martin (So.)	
RG	**73**	**Chandler Brewer (Sr.)**	63	Eric Golston (Jr.)	
RT	77	Amir Luckett (Jr.)	79	Cole Kirby (Fr.)	
QB	**12**	**Brent Stockstill (Sr.)**		Chance Nolan (Fr.)	
RB	35	Terelle West (Jr.)	**11**	**Brad Anderson (So.)**	
DEFENSE (7)					
DE	**56**	**Walter Brady (Sr.)**	94	Tyshun Render (Jr.)	
DT	**93**	**Malik Manciel (Jr.)**	92	Ty Nix (So.)	
DT	91	Jordan Ferguson (So.)	96	Rosheem Collins (Sr.)	
DE	43	Jahmal Jones (Sr.)	85	Darrius Liggins (Sr.)	
SLB	**30**	**Darius Harris (Sr.)**	32	Chris Melton (Sr.)	
MLB	42	Cody Smith (Fr.)	40	Avery Jones (Jr.)	
WLB	**16**	**Khalil Brooks (Jr.)**	20	DQ Thomas (So.)	
CB	4	O.J. Johnson (Sr.)	2	Chris Stamps (Jr.)	
CB	**29**	**Darryl Randolph (Sr.)**	22	Cordell Hudson (Sr.)	
SS	**7**	**Jovante Moffatt (Sr.)**	23	Wesley Bush (Sr.)	
FS	**12**	**Reed Blankenship (So.)**	38	Kendricks Gladney (Jr.)	
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K	19	Crews Holt (So.)	**KR**	25 Desmond Anderson (Sr.)	
P	99	Matt Bonadies (Sr.)	**PR**	12 Reed Blankenship (So.)	

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Brent Stockstill, 239-138-1,672-8, 16 TDs
Rushing: Tavares Thomas, 93 att., 507 yds., 9 TDs
Receiving: Ty Lee, 79 rec., 955 yds., 5 TDs
Tackles: Jovante Moffatt, 101
Sacks: Khalil Brooks, 7.5
Interceptions: Reed Blankenship, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Rick Stockstill
Record at School: 79-72 (12 years)
Career Record: 79-72 (12 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Tony Franklin
Defensive Coordinator: Scott Shafer
Murfreesboro, TN • Floyd Stadium (30,788)

Brent Beerends, MT Athletic Communications

Old Dominion **Monarchs**

National Forecast: **103** • C-USA East Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **6-6, 3-5 C-USA**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at Liberty
Sept.	8	FIU
Sept.	15	at Charlotte
Sept.	22	Virginia Tech
Sept.	29	at East Carolina
Oct.	6	at Florida Atlantic
Oct.	13	Marshall
Oct.	20	at Western Kentucky
Oct.	27	Middle Tennessee
Nov.	10	North Texas
Nov.	17	VMI
Nov.	24	at Rice

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 3-5 C-USA

Sept.	2	Albany	W	31-17
Sept.	9	at Massachusetts	W	17-7
Sept.	16	North Carolina	L	23-53
Sept.	23	at Virginia Tech	L	0-38
Oct.	7	Florida Atlantic	L	28-58
Oct.	14	at Marshall	L	3-35
Oct.	20	Western Kentucky	L	31-35
Oct.	28	at North Texas	L	38-45
Nov.	4	Charlotte	W	6-0
Nov.	11	at FIU	W	37-30
Nov.	18	Rice	W	24-21
Nov.	25	at Middle Tennessee	L	10-41

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Robert Mayo, WR, Chantilly, VA
2. Elijah Davis, RB, Lynchburg, VA
3. Sokoya McDuffie, DT, Florence, SC
4. Kenneth Gardner III, CB, Silver Spring, MD
5. Nigel Fitzgerald, WR, Greensboro, NC
6. A.C. White, TE, Harrisonburg, VA
7. Lance Boykin, CB, High Point, NC
8. Will Knight, RB, Germantown, PA
9. Nick Saldiveri, OT, Monroe, NC
10. Isaiah Spencer, ATH, Gloucester, VA

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	20.7 ppg	11	114
Rushing	163.9 ypg	8	66
Passing	168.4 ypg	11	112
Total	332.3 ypg	11	114
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	31.7 ppg	10	92
Rushing	204.2 ypg	12	105
Passing	223.5 ypg	9	65
Total	427.7 ypg	11	93
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
-4	-0.33	7	93

STAT CORNER

17.1

ODU opponents gained at least 10 yards on 17.1 plays per game in 2017, seventh most in FBS and second most in C-USA.

OFFENSE Sophomore Steven Williams pilots the offense again after earning the starting quarterback job midway through last season. The youngest player to see action in the FBS in 2017, Williams started seven games, threw for 1,528 yards and accounted for nine total touchdowns. While Williams, who will have a seasoned backup in junior Blake LaRussa, threw 11 interceptions, he played the final four games without a turnover.

"This is a big opportunity for him," Monarchs coach Bobby Wilder says. "He's put on size, and put on strength. You can see the development physically."

Senior running back Jeremy Cox, who gained 797 yards from scrimmage before missing last season's final two games, will fill the shoes of the departed Ray Lawry, who led the Monarchs in rushing in each of the last four years. Seniors Isaiah Harper and Travis Fulgham were strong options in the passing game last season, while fellow receiver Jonathan Duhart, who has 109 career catches for 1,619 yards and 19 scores, returns for a fifth year after injuries wiped out most his 2017 season.

The veteran playmakers will benefit from the four starters who return along the offensive line.

DEFENSE The defensive front will be a problem for opponents. Senior all-conference end Oshane Ximines returns after posting a school-record 8.5 sacks and team-high 14 tackles for a loss last season. Fellow ends Daniel Appouh and Tim Ward are also back after combining for 6.5 sacks in 2017. Six tackles with significant experience return, headlined by seniors Miles Fox and Pat Toal, who combined for 8.5 sacks last year.

At linebacker, Old Dominion returns its top two tacklers from last season in senior Marvin Branch and sophomore Jordan Young.

The secondary is where there are the biggest questions. Senior safeties Sean Carter, Justice Davila and Justin Noye have established themselves as strong, reliable options, but due to roster turnover, the rest of the unit is largely unproven. Joe Joe Headen and Jamez Brickhouse should grab the cornerback spots after starting at points last season.

SPECIALISTS Old Dominion likely has the best special teams talent in the league. Kick returner Harper and junior punt returner Darrell Brown are back after earning first-team all-conference nods in 2017. Sophomore placekicker Nick Rice hit 11 of his 12 field goal tries inside of 40 yards and was perfect on his 27 extra points. Meanwhile, junior punter Bailey Cate returns after averaging 40.5 yards per kick.

FINAL ANALYSIS Five seasons after restarting its program and moving up from the FCS ranks, Old Dominion joined Conference USA. In the four seasons since, the Monarchs have established themselves as a solid league member, winning 17 conference games and earning an East Division title and bowl victory in 2016. However, with each mark of progress, the expectations have increased, making last season's 5–7 mark a bit of a letdown. With plenty of starters back and wins in three of their final four games last season, there's reason to believe that the Monarchs can make another jump forward.

"We feel like we can do that, with a lot of veteran players and the amount of guys back," Wilder says. "There's going to be a lot of competition all across the board. When you come off of a season where you don't go to a bowl game, every spot is up for grabs."



OSHANE XIMINES

"They've got the best running backs in our league and defensive ends that can cause major problems in pass rush. This could be the year for them."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)

WR	**15**	**Isaiah Harper (Sr.)**	1	Kesean Strong (Jr.)
WR	7	Travis Fulgham (Sr.)	2	Hasaan Patterson (Jr.)
WR	9	Jonathan Duhart (Sr.)	8	Noah Ellison (So.)
LT	**71**	**Isaac Weaver (So.)**	67	Elijah Rivers (So.)
LG	**74**	**Tony Barnett (Jr.)**	59	Eric Magwood (Jr.)
C	**63**	**Nick Clarke (Sr.)**	75	Diego Cervantes (So.)
RG	61	Andrew Lawson (So.)	**68**	**A.J. Davison (Sr.)**
RT	**73**	**Chad Hendricks (Sr.)**	72	T.J. Storment (So.)
TE	85	Nijee Cox (Jr.)	89	Marcus Joyner (So.)
QB	**5**	**Steven Williams (So.)**	11	Blake LaRussa (Jr.)
RB	**35**	**Jeremy Cox (Sr.)**	16	Brandon Sinclair (So.)

DEFENSE (7)

DE	4	Daniel Appouh (Sr.)	12	Ryan Londree (Sr.)
DT	**17**	**Pat Toal (Sr.)**	8	Brandon Tyson (Sr.)
DT	**11**	**Miles Fox (Sr.)**	54	Jeremy Meiser (So.)
DE	**7**	**Oshane Ximines (Sr.)**	2	Tim Ward (Sr.)
MLB	**37**	**Marvin Branch (Sr.)**	34	Lawrence Garner (So.)
OLB	**32**	**Jordan Young (So.)**	45	Demetrius Stitmon (So.)
CB	**5**	**Jamez Brickhouse (Jr.)**	29	Elijah Blue (So.)
CB	24	Joe Joe Headen (So.)	27	Jelani Carter (Jr.)
NB	**31**	**Sean Carter (Sr.)**	25	Prince Ajegwu (So.)
FS	28	Justice Davila (Sr.)	33	Austin Wood (Fr.)
SS	22	Justin Noye (Sr.)	38	Parrish Gordon (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	96	Bailey Cate (Jr.)	**KR**	15	Isaiah Harper (Sr.)
P	98	Nick Rice (So.)	**PR**	10	Darrell Brown (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Steven Williams, 263-147-1,528-11, 6 TDs
Rushing: Jeremy Cox, 147 att., 621 yds., 4 TDs
Receiving: Isaiah Harper, 39 rec., 462 yds., 0 TDs
Tackles: Marvin Branch, 96
Sacks: Oshane Ximines, 8.5
Interceptions: Sean Carter, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Bobby Wilder
Record at School: 72-37 (9 years)
Career Record: 72-37 (9 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Brian Scott
Defensive Coordinator: Rich Nagy
Norfolk, VA • Foreman Field (20,118)

ODU Athletics

WKU Hilltoppers

National Forecast: **111** • C-USA East Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **4-8, 2-6 C-USA**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at Wisconsin
Sept.	8	Maine
Sept.	15	at Louisville
Sept.	22	at Ball State
Sept.	29	Marshall
Oct.	13	at Charlotte
Oct.	20	Old Dominion
Oct.	27	FIU
Nov.	2	at Middle Tennessee
Nov.	10	at Florida Atlantic
Nov.	17	UTEP
Nov.	24	at Louisiana Tech

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 6-7, 4-4 C-USA

Sept.	2	Eastern Kentucky	W	31-17
Sept.	9	at Illinois	L	7-20
Sept.	16	Louisiana Tech	L	22-23
Sept.	23	Ball State	W	33-21
Oct.	7	at UTEP	W	15-14
Oct.	14	Charlotte	W	45-14
Oct.	20	at Old Dominion	W	35-31
Oct.	28	Florida Atlantic	L	28-42
Nov.	4	at Vanderbilt	L	17-31
Nov.	11	at Marshall	L	23-30
Nov.	17	Middle Tennessee (ot)	W	41-38
Nov.	24	at FIU	L	17-41
Dec.	16	vs. Georgia State #	L	17-27

#Cure Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Kevaris Thomas, QB, Lakeland, FL
2. Arthur Brathwaite, S, Miami, FL
3. B.J. Crim, S, Ocala, FL
4. Garland LaFrance, RB, New Orleans, LA
5. Lichon Terrell, DT, Hogansville, GA
6. Spencer Gaddis, WR, Alpharetta, GA
7. Russell Brown, WR, Lehigh Acres, FL
8. Mario Wright, ILB, Flossmoor, IL
9. Anthony Spurlock, WR, New Orleans, LA
10. Gino Appleberry, RB, Fairburn, GA

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	25.5 ppg	8	87
Rushing	60.8 ypg	14	130
Passing	335.0 ypg	1	7
Total	395.8 ypg	5	69
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	26.8 ppg	8	66
Rushing	170.3 ypg	6	70
Passing	206.8 ypg	4	40
Total	377.2 ypg	6	53
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
-8	-0.62	9	111

STAT CORNER

791

WKU netted only 791 rushing yards in 2017 and was one of only two teams nationally to rush for fewer than 1,000 yards.

OFFENSE One year after leading the nation with 7.65 yards per play in 2016, WKU plummeted to 96th (5.32) in its first year under coach Mike Sanford, who plans to spend more hands-on time with his offense in 2018. He coached quarterbacks at Stanford, Boise State and Notre Dame and was coordinator with the Broncos and Fighting Irish. He'll get back to his roots this season by calling plays and working with the QBs.

Sanford must pick a quarterback replacement for Mike White, who totaled 8,540 yards and 63 touchdowns the last two seasons. Drew Eckels is the room's veteran and can add a QB running dimension to WKU's offense. True freshman Kevaris Thomas — a rare four-star recruit (247Sports) for the Hilltoppers — could also play at some point this fall.

WKU's last rushing play of 20 yards or more came in the 2016 Boca Raton Bowl. Joshua Samuel redshirted last year but came on in the spring as a running back with speed who isn't afraid to run inside. Jacquez Sloan is a speedy sophomore receiver who became a deep threat as a freshman.

The production of young skill players is dependent on an offensive line that was bad in 2017. WKU surrendered 3.7 sacks per game, contributing to an FBS-worst mark of 2.0 yards per carry. Sanford hired TJ Woods, formerly of Wisconsin and Oregon State, to change that.

DEFENSE While WKU's offense gave up 48 sacks last season, its own defense tallied just 12. An absent pass rush put pressure on the Hilltoppers' secondary, and the defense cracked down the stretch. WKU's final seven opponents all scored at least 27 points after none of the first six reached 24.

Sophomore DeAngelo Malone is the Toppers' quickest pass rusher. Coaches hope he can pack muscle onto his 6'4", 215-pound frame and withstand the rigors of a full season in the trenches.

Defensive tackle Evan Sayner returns after suffering a knee injury midway through the 2017 season. Linebacker Ben Holt — son of former Hilltopper D-coordinator Nick Holt — will see more time after all-conference pick Joel Iyiegbuniwe left for the NFL Draft.

The secondary is the strength of coordinator Clayton White's defense. Nickel back Ta'Corian Darden, cornerback DeAndre Farris and safeties Drell Greene and Devon Key all return as starters. Key ranked second for WKU last season with 94 tackles. Farris was No. 19 nationally with 13 pass breakups.

SPECIALISTS Ryan Nuss missed five kicks last year from 39 yards or less. A botched Jake Collins fake punt attempt turned the tide late in a defeat at FIU, while WKU fell victim to a late Florida Atlantic punt fake in a loss to the Owls. Nuss and Collins are back. The Hilltoppers will need new kick and punt returners after the graduations of Cameron Echols-Luper, Nacarius Fant and Kylen Towner.

FINAL ANALYSIS WKU combined for 23 wins and two C-USA titles in 2015 and '16, then fell last season to 6–7 — the team's first losing record since 2010. A 1–5 finish ended Sanford's honeymoon, but reaching bowl eligibility for the eighth straight year with an unproven roster would make for a positive 2018. The Hilltoppers have young talent thanks to strong 2017 and '18 recruiting classes that focused on talent-rich Georgia. The more those players see the field this season, the more experience they'll gain for what Sanford hopes is a return to the top of C-USA.



LUCKY JACKSON

"Mike White was a great quarterback but didn't really fit what (Mike) Sanford likes to do. Expect them to be more mobile at that position."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (3)					
WR	11	Lucky Jackson (Jr.)	16	Quin Jernighan (Jr.)	
WR	2	Jacquez Sloan (So.)	7	Jahcour Pearson (So.)	
WR	9	Xavier Lane (So.)		Anthony Spurlock (Fr.)	
LT	68	Parker Howell (Jr.)	76	Preston Mixon (Fr.)	
LG	**63**	**Miles Pate (Jr.)**	61	Jordan Meredith (So.)	
C	**64**	**Dennis Edwards (Sr.)**	67	Seth Joest (So.)	
RG	**74**	**Tyler Witt (So.)**	53	Caleb Etheridge (Fr.)	
RT	70	Cole Spencer (So.)	71	R.J. Scaife (Jr.)	
TE	85	Mik'Quan Deane (Sr.)	42	Kyle Fourtenbary (So.)	
QB	4	Drew Eckels (Sr.)		Kevaris Thomas (Fr.)	
RB	25	Joshua Samuel (Fr.)	32	D'Andre Ferby (Sr.)	
DEFENSE (7)					
DE	43	Carson Jordan (Jr.)	**95**	**Heath Wiggins (Jr.)**	
DT	**96**	**Julien Lewis (Sr.)**	53	Jeremy Darvin (So.)	
DT	55	Evan Sayner (Sr.)	55	Jalen Madden (So.)	
DE	10	DeAngelo Malone (So.)	35	Nicholas Coffey (Jr.)	
LB	**25**	**Masai Whyte (Sr.)**	50	Der'Quione Mobley (Sr.)	
LB	44	Ben Holt (Jr.)	28	Demetrius Cain (So.)	
NB	**15**	**Ta'Corian Darden (Jr.)**	31	Antwon Kincade (So.)	
CB	**22**	**DeAndre Farris (Sr.)**	26	Dionté Ruffin (So.)	
CB	24	Roger Cray (So.)	5	LA Rogers-Anderson (So.)	
S	**9**	**Drell Greene (Sr.)**	36	Kyle Bailey (So.)	
S	**2**	**Devon Key (So.)**	8	Malik Occiur (Fr.)	
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K	37	Ryan Nuss (Sr.)	**KR**	2 Jacquez Sloan (So.)	
P	49	Jake Collins (Sr.)	**PR**	11 Lucky Jackson (Jr.)	

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Drew Eckels, 11-8-86-1, 0 TDs
Rushing: D'Andre Ferby, 117 att., 373 yds., 3 TDs
Receiving: Lucky Jackson, 39 rec., 600 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: Devon Key, 94
Sacks: Two players tied with 1.5
Interceptions: Drell Greene, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mike Sanford
Record at School: 6-7 (1 year)
Career Record: 6-7 (1 year)
Offensive Coordinator: Junior Adams
Defensive Coordinator: Clayton White
Bowling Green, KY • Houchens Industries-L.T. Smith Stadium (22,113)

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

Louisiana Tech **Bulldogs**

National Forecast: **79** • C-USA West Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **8-4, 6-2 C-USA**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at South Alabama
Sept.	8	Southern
Sept.	22	at LSU
Sept.	29	at North Texas
Oct.	6	UAB
Oct.	13	at UTSA
Oct.	20	UTEP
Oct.	27	at Florida Atlantic
Nov.	3	at Mississippi State
Nov.	10	Rice
Nov.	17	at Southern Miss
Nov.	24	Western Kentucky

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 4-4 C-USA

Sept.	2	Northwestern State	W	52-24
Sept.	9	Mississippi State	L	21-57
Sept.	16	at Western Kentucky	W	23-22
Sept.	23	at South Carolina	L	16-17
Sept.	30	South Alabama	W	34-16
Oct.	7	at UAB	L	22-23
Oct.	21	Southern Miss	L	27-34
Oct.	28	at Rice	W	42-28
Nov.	4	North Texas	L	23-24
Nov.	11	Florida Atlantic	L	23-48
Nov.	18	at UTEP	W	42-21
Nov.	25	UTSA	W	20-6
Dec.	20	vs. SMU #	W	51-10

#Frisco Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Maureese Wren, WR, Mesquite, TX
2. Isaiah Windmon, LB, Marrero, LA
3. Willie Allen, OT, River Ridge, LA*
4. BeeJay Williamson, S, Mesquite, TX
5. Derek Turner, S, Saint Francisville, LA
6. Brodrick Calhoun, CB, Mesquite, TX
7. Aaron Allen, QB, Missouri City, TX
8. Tahj Magee, ATH, Franklinton, LA
9. Davon Harris, RB, Saint Francisville, LA
10. Steven Shaw, DE, Houston, TX

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	30.5 ppg	3	48
Rushing	172.5 ypg	6	55
Passing	230.5 ypg	7	67
Total	403.0 ypg	4	62
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	25.4 ppg	6	54
Rushing	176.6 ypg	9	81
Passing	208.9 ypg	5	46
Total	385.5 ypg	7	60
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
+13	+1.00	1	5

STAT CORNER

+13

Based on fumble recovery and interception rates, Louisiana Tech's expected turnover margin was plus-2.7. Actual margin: plus-13.

OFFENSE J'Mar Smith didn't exactly engrave his name in the annals of school history in 2017 — the Bulldogs' scoring average declined by 14 points per game compared to 2016 — but his presence alone this fall will make him something of a curiosity at Louisiana Tech: a real, live returning starter at quarterback. Barring injury, Smith will be the first Tech signal caller to top the depth chart in consecutive seasons since 2010.

It didn't help Smith's cause last year that he was working with an almost entirely revamped receiving corps. But four of the top five targets in that group will be back, including slot specialist Teddy Veal, who finished among C-USA's leaders in receptions (74), yards (950) and touchdowns (seven) en route to a second-team all-conference nod. Smith should also benefit from the return of Utah transfer Alfred Smith, who missed all of 2017 with a knee injury. The offensive line is largely intact as well, led by interior mainstays O'Shea Dugas and Ethan Reed.

Contrary to its pass-happy reputation, Tech has produced a 1,000-yard rusher each of the past four years. And while the outlook on the ground is less certain with the departures of 1K Club members Boston Scott and Jarred Craft, there are viable veteran candidates to continue the streak in Jaqwis Dancy and converted wide receiver Kam McKnight.

DEFENSE Statistically speaking, the defense was nondescript in 2017, finishing in the middle of the pack in C-USA in every almost every major category. Still, compared to 2016 it was a step in the right direction: The Bulldogs improved significantly in terms of both yards and points per game, and with a number of regulars back there's every reason to expect the upward trajectory under coordinator Blake Baker to continue.

The most decorated of the holdovers is senior end Jaylon Ferguson, a two-time All-C-USA pick with more career sacks (27.5) and tackles for a loss (40.5) to his credit than any other active FBS player. But the most intriguing playmaker may be the youngest, sophomore cornerback Amik Robertson, a Freshman All-American who started every game and picked off five passes. There is a glaring void behind him with the graduation of All-C-USA safety Secdrick Cooper, but between Robertson, fellow corner L'Jarius Sneed and safety Darryl Lewis, there's very little danger of the secondary reverting to its highly flammable 2016 form.

SPECIALISTS Departed kicker Jonathan Barnes set nearly every school record. In his place, the Bulldogs will likely turn to Brady Farlow, who handled most of the punting duties in 2017 but has yet to attempt a field goal or extra point in his career. As a punter, Farlow split time with Australian Davan Dyer, who also returns.

FINAL ANALYSIS Last year's 7–6 finish was a minor step back for a program coming off three consecutive nine-win campaigns. But that wasn't unexpected following an exodus of star power from the '16 team, and the gap was arguably narrower than the records indicate: Tech went 1–4 in games decided by a touchdown or less. The season ended on the high note of a three-game winning streak, capped by a stunning, 51–10 bowl romp over SMU.

The lineup boasts as much top-to-bottom experience as any in Conference USA. This may not be Skip Holtz's most talented outfit, and the conference schedule doesn't do it any favors. But in a wide-open C-USA West race, the Bulldogs have the pieces in place to return to the top.



J'MAR SMITH

"Their roster most compares to a Power 5 program in power and size than any other program in the conference. That matters most in the defensive front seven."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

		OFFENSE (8)		
WR	9	**Teddy Veal (Sr.)**		Tahj Magee (Fr.)
WR	4	Alfred Smith (Jr.)	81	Cee Jay Powell (So.)
WR	86	**Rashid Bonnette (Jr.)**	84	Javonte Woodard (Jr.)
WR	89	Adrian Hardy (So.)		Maureese Wren (Fr.)
LT	75	**Michael Rodriguez (Sr.)**		Willie Allen (So.)
LG	74	**O'Shea Dugas (Sr.)**	54	Hanner Shipley (Sr.)
C	65	**Kody Russey (So.)**	55	Drew Kirkpatrick (Jr.)
RG	61	**Ethan Reed (Jr.)**	66	Shane Carpenter (Sr.)
RT	57	DeVante Lovett (Jr.)		Christian Henderson (Fr.)
QB	8	**J'Mar Smith (Jr.)**	10	Westin Elliott (Jr.)
RB	23	Jaqwis Dancy (Jr.)	15	**Kam McKnight (Sr.)**
		DEFENSE (6)		
DE	45	**Jaylon Ferguson (Sr.)**	47	Eric Kendzior (Jr.)
DT	94	**Jordan Bradford (Sr.)**	90	Courtney Wallace (Jr.)
DT	99	**Keonatye Garner (Sr.)**	96	Ka'Derrion Mason (Jr.)
DE	95	Matthew Ydarraga (Sr.)	93	Immanuel Turner (Sr.)
LB	33	**Dae'Von Washington (Sr.)**	35	Collin Scott (Jr.)
LB	44	Brandon Durman (Sr.)	39	Randy Hogan Jr. (Sr.)
CB	21	**Amik Robertson (So.)**	30	Aaron Roberson (Sr.)
CB	24	L'Jarius Sneed (Jr.)	32	Trey Spencer (Sr.)
S	38	**Darryl Lewis (Jr.)**		Isaiah Windmon (Fr.)
S	42	James Jackson (Jr.)	7	Jaiden Cole (So.)
S	28	Jordan Baldwin (Sr.)	26	Jacorion Andrews (Fr.)
		SPECIAL TEAMS		
K	40	Brady Farlow (Jr.)	KR	23 Jaqwis Dancy (Jr.)
P	36	Davan Dyer (Sr.)	PR	9 Teddy Veal (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: J'Mar Smith, 409-229-2,974-5, 16 TDs
Rushing: J'Mar Smith, 119 att., 371 yds., 6 TDs
Receiving: Teddy Veal, 74 rec., 950 yds., 7 TDs
Tackles: Dae'Von Washington, 70
Sacks: Jaylon Ferguson, 7.0
Interceptions: Amik Robertson, 5

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Skip Holtz
Record at School: 38-28 (5 years)
Career Record: 126-99 (18 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Todd Fitch
Defensive Coordinator: Blake Baker
Ruston, LA • Joe Aillet Stadium (28,019)

Donny J Crowe/Louisiana Tech University

North Texas **Mean Green**

National Forecast: **78** • C-USA West Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **8-5, 6-2 C-USA**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	SMU
Sept.	8	Incarnate Word
Sept.	15	at Arkansas
Sept.	22	at Liberty
Sept.	29	Louisiana Tech
Oct.	6	at UTEP
Oct.	13	Southern Miss
Oct.	20	at UAB
Oct.	27	Rice
Nov.	10	at Old Dominion
Nov.	17	Florida Atlantic
Nov.	24	at UTSA

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 9-5, 7-1 C-USA

Sept.	2	Lamar	W	59-14
Sept.	9	at SMU	L	32-54
Sept.	16	at Iowa	L	14-31
Sept.	23	UAB	W	46-43
Sept.	30	at Southern Miss	W	43-28
Oct.	14	UTSA	W	29-26
Oct.	21	at Florida Atlantic	L	31-69
Oct.	28	Old Dominion	W	45-38
Nov.	4	at Louisiana Tech	W	24-23
Nov.	11	UTEP	W	45-10
Nov.	18	Army	W	52-49
Nov.	25	at Rice	W	30-14
Dec.	2	at Florida Atlantic #	L	17-41
Dec.	16	vs. Troy %	L	30-50

#C-USA Championship %New Orleans Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Alex Morris, S, Humble, TX
2. Reggie Williams, S, Grand Prairie, TX
3. Kevyon Davis, S, Ennis, TX
4. Jyaire Shorter, WR, Killeen, TX
5. Austin Ogunmakin, WR, Alief, TX
6. Kason Martin, QB, Manvel, TX
7. DeAndre Torrey, RB, Gautier, MS*
8. Tim Faison, OLB, Tallahassee, FL*
9. Jason Bean, QB, Mansfield, TX
10. Jaxon Gibbs, S, The Colony, TX

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	35.5 ppg	2	19
Rushing	163.2 ypg	9	67
Passing	291.9 ypg	2	21
Total	455.1 ypg	2	24
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	35.0 ppg	12	111
Rushing	202.5 ypg	11	103
Passing	228.9 ypg	10	72
Total	431.4 ypg	12	97
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
-11	-0.79	12	119

STAT CORNER

-11

UNT's turnover margin flipped from plus-1 in 2016 to minus-11 in 2017 — minus-2 in nine wins and minus-9 in five losses.

OFFENSE The key parts of a potent passing attack return. Quarterback Mason Fine, the reigning C-USA Offensive Player of the Year, broke single-season school records with 4,052 passing yards and 31 TDs last season, and he gets back five of his top six receivers. But protecting Fine, a 5'11", 180-pounder, is a major concern after the Mean Green allowed 39 sacks, tied for the eighth most in FBS. The offensive line hopes to find growth in continuity. As many as four starters return, depending on whether right tackle Riley Mayfield can be granted a sixth year of eligibility.

If Fine can throw from a clean pocket, he will have several proven targets. Sure-handed Michael Lawrence is in the slot after leading the team with 62 catches last season. Big-play threat Jalen Guyton, a second-team all-league selection, had a team-high nine TD catches, and Rico Bussey had 677 yards and seven TDs.

The ground game will get a facelift after the graduation of three-year starter Jeffery Wilson. A trio will replace him, including steady sophomores Nic Smith (684 rushing yards) and Evan Johnson (239) and midterm signee DeAndre Torrey, who may have the most upside after a strong spring.

DEFENSE Defensive coordinator Troy Reffett likes to bring pressure in his 3-3 defense, but with risks come big plays. North Texas allowed more than 40 points in six games last season, so the defense will try to trim that number without losing its aggressive style.

Finding the right combination on the line will be critical. Much of last season's deep rotation is gone, so junior college transfers and freshmen must fill the gaps. Roderick Young's versatility suddenly becomes more valuable after making a team-high 28 career starts at both nose tackle and defensive end.

Two starters return at linebacker. E.J. Ejiya had a team-high 109 tackles, including 12 for a loss, last season, and Brandon Garner had 68 tackles. Depth is a concern, though.

The secondary must lock down in man coverage to cut down on long pass plays. Four starters are back, important since North Texas mostly plays nickel coverage. Safety Khairi Muhammad and cornerback Kemon Hall had 94 and 72 tackles, respectively, but pass coverage is more important than volume tackling.

SPECIALISTS Trevor Moore, a four-year starter and one of the top kickers in FBS, is gone. Arkansas graduate transfer Cole Hedlund, the son of the North Texas women's soccer coach, is a reasonable replacement. He made 14-of-24 field goals and 91-of-91 PATs for the Razorbacks before losing his starting job last season. Blake Patterson and Alvin Kenworthy both return to share punting duties.

FINAL ANALYSIS Coach Seth Littrell has the roster to repeat as C-USA West Division champions, but progressing further will be difficult. In two losses to C-USA champion Florida Atlantic and one loss to Troy in the New Orleans Bowl, the Mean Green fell by an average margin of 27.3 points. Those lopsided losses to end last season could have been an anomaly, or they may point to flaws in pass protection and the defense overall. Both must be better this season.

Early non-conference games should yield at least two wins, helping to put another bowl bid in reach. Plus, conference home games against Louisiana Tech, Southern Miss and Florida Atlantic offer the opportunity to make another run in the West.



MASON FINE

"The offensive system is interesting; they're doing more experimental stuff than you'd expect from a Mike Leach tree OC (Graham Harrell)."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (9)

WR	**9**	**Jalen Guyton (Jr.)**	13	Quinetin Jackson (Sr.)
WR	**32**	**Michael Lawrence (Jr.)**	82	Deion Hair-Griffin (So.)
WR	84	Jaelon Darden (So.)	18	Keegan Brewer (So.)
WR	**8**	**Rico Bussey (Jr.)**	**87**	**Kelvin Smith (Jr.)**
LT	**77**	**Elex Woodworth (Jr.)**	56	Jacob Brammer (Fr.)
LG	70	Thomas Preston (Jr.)	**71**	**Jordan Murray (Sr.)**
C	**60**	**Sosaia Mose (Jr.)**	54	Creighton Barr (Sr.)
RG	72	Manase Mose (Fr.)	74	Chandler Anthony (So.)
RT	**79**	**Riley Mayfield (Sr.)**	56	Jacob Brammer (Fr.)
QB	**6**	**Mason Fine (Jr.)**	19	Quinn Shanbour (Sr.)
RB	21	Nic Smith (So.)	29	DeAndre Torrey (So.)

DEFENSE (8)

DE	**50**	**LaDarius Hamilton (Jr.)**	97	Dion Novil (So.)
NT	15	Ulaiasi Tauaalo (Sr.)	91	Dayton LeBlanc (Fr.)
DE	**49**	**Roderick Young (Sr.)**	52	Darrian McMillan (Jr.)
OLB	17	Joe Ozougwu (So.)	23	Jamie King (Jr.)
MLB	**37**	**Brandon Garner (Sr.)**	35	Kody Fulp (Fr.)
OLB	**22**	**E.J. Ejiya (Sr.)**	20	William LeMasters (Jr.)
CB	**9**	**Nate Brooks (Sr.)**	11	Cam Johnson (So.)
CB	**16**	**Kemon Hall (Sr.)**	39	Jameel Moore (Jr.)
NB	5	Tyreke Davis (So.)	**27**	**Ashton Preston (Sr.)**
SS	**4**	**Khairi Muhammad (Jr.)**	31	Makyle Sanders (So.)
FS	24	Taylor Robinson (Jr.)	6	Tre Siggers (Fr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	30	Cole Hedlund (Sr.)	**KR**	26	Evan Johnson (So.)
P	93	Blake Patterson (So.)	**PR**	84	Jaelon Darden (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Mason Fine, 511-324-4,052-15, 31 TDs
Rushing: Nic Smith, 138 att., 684 yds., 6 TDs
Receiving: Michael Lawrence, 62 rec., 819 yds., 4 TDs
Tackles: E.J. Ejiya, 109
Sacks: E.J. Ejiya, 7.0
Interceptions: Kemon Hall, 1; LaDarius Hamilton, 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Seth Littrell
Record at School: 14-13 (2 years)
Career Record: 14-13 (2 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Graham Harrell
Defensive Coordinator: Troy Reffett
Denton, TX • Apogee Stadium (30,850)

AP

Rice **Owls**

National Forecast: **128** • C-USA West Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **2-11, 1-7 C-USA**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug.	25	Prairie View A&M
Sept.	1	Houston
Sept.	8	at Hawaii
Sept.	22	at Southern Miss
Sept.	29	at Wake Forest
Oct.	6	UTSA
Oct.	13	UAB
Oct.	20	at FIU
Oct.	27	at North Texas
Nov.	3	UTEP
Nov.	10	at Louisiana Tech
Nov.	17	at LSU
Nov.	24	Old Dominion

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 1-11, 1-7 C-USA

Aug.	26	vs. Stanford #	L	7-62
Sept.	9	at UTEP	W	31-14
Sept.	16	at Houston	L	3-38
Sept.	23	FIU	L	7-13
Sept.	30	at Pittsburgh	L	10-42
Oct.	7	Army	L	12-49
Oct.	21	at UTSA	L	7-20
Oct.	28	Louisiana Tech	L	28-42
Nov.	4	at UAB	L	21-52
Nov.	11	Southern Miss	L	34-43
Nov.	18	at Old Dominion	L	21-24
Nov.	25	North Texas	L	14-30

#Sydney, Australia

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Cameron Valentine, DE, Richmond, TX
2. Jacob Doddridge, FB, Southlake, TX
3. Jake Syptak, OT, The Woodlands, TX
4. Juma Otoviano, RB, Arlington, TX
5. Kebreyun Page, OLB, Cedar Hill, TX
6. Antonio Montero, OLB, Eden Prairie, MN
7. Brendan Harmon, WR, Fort Worth, TX
8. August Pitre, WR, Opelousas, LA
9. Cole Garcia, OG, Dallas, TX
10. Jason White, CB, Dallas, TX

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	16.3 ppg	12	125
Rushing	187.0 ypg	2	38
Passing	144.8 ypg	12	119
Total	331.8 ypg	12	116
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	35.8 ppg	13	113
Rushing	192.6 ypg	10	96
Passing	233.3 ypg	12	77
Total	425.8 ypg	10	90
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
-23	-1.92	14	129

STAT CORNER

-8.7

Based on fumble recovery and interception rates, Rice's expected turnover margin was minus-8.7. Actual margin: minus-23.

OFFENSE At the end of spring practice, first-year head coach Mike Bloomgren said that Jackson Tyner was the "leader in the clubhouse" at quarterback, although the job will remain up for grabs in preseason camp. The top two contenders (Tyner and Sam Glaesmann) never seized the job last season, allowing true freshman Miklo Smalls to throw for 623 yards and four touchdowns. Smalls missed spring practice for personal reasons, and Glaesmann was out following shoulder surgery. Adding to the mix are walk-on Evan Marshman and Shawn Stankavage, a graduate transfer from Vanderbilt.

The deepest position on offense is the backfield, and Bloomgren wants to continue the physical brand of football from his days at Stanford. The top three rushers return — Nahshon Ellerbe, Austin Walter and spring standout Emmanuel Esupka.

Aaron Cephus gives the Owls a big-play threat, finishing tied for third nationally with six catches of at least 50 yards. He had a touchdown in four consecutive games and is a matchup nightmare. After starting three games, Austin Trammell will be counted on to play a bigger role.

Rice must replace four starters on the offensive line, including standout left tackle Calvin Anderson, now a graduate transfer at Texas.

DEFENSE Tragedy struck the program in early March when junior defensive end Blain Padgett unexpectedly passed away. "Right now, we are in a good place because we have had a chance to grieve and go through all the steps and get back on the football field and kind of learn what our new normal is without Blain beside us," Bloomgren says.

Even with the graduation of Brian Womac and the transfer of Preston Gordon (Texas Tech), the Owls' three-man front should be the strength of the unit. Sixth-year senior Graysen Schantz was granted another year of eligibility and will be used as a rusher off the edge.

Anthony Ekpe will be tasked with replacing Emmanuel Ellerbee, who had a team-high 120 tackles from the strong-side linebacker position. Dylan Silcox is regarded as the team's top interior linebacker, while Martin Nwakamma will man the middle.

The secondary will have a new look, which may not necessarily be a bad thing after the Owls had only three interceptions, second fewest in the nation. New defensive coordinator Brian Smith comes from Michigan, which relied on strong man coverage in the back end.

The Owls plan to run a 3-4 base but will use five defensive backs a good percentage of the time.

SPECIALISTS Punter Jack Fox "can be a big-time player at the next level," Bloomgren says. Fox led C-USA with a 44.2-yard average, including 17 of at least 50 yards. The Owls attempted only five field goals, with Will Harrison going 2-of-4.

FINAL ANALYSIS After a successful run as a Stanford assistant, Bloomgren inherits a Rice program coming off three consecutive losing seasons. He spent the spring instilling a physical brand he wants to be the Owls' calling card. "We're not where we want to be," Bloomgren said at the end of the spring, "but thank God we're not where we used to be."

With a game at Hawaii, the Owls will play a 13-game schedule that includes eight bowl teams from 2017, including games against Houston, Wake Forest and LSU. Don't expect Bloomgren to be a miracle worker as he builds the program for the long haul.



AARON CEPHUS

"They'll have to apply the Stanford model to Texas recruiting, then also learn to go outside the state. Take the losses now, commit totally to the future."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (2)

WR	82	Jaeger Bull (Fr.)	80	Jonathan Sanchez (Fr.)	
WR	10	Austin Trammell (So.)	8	Cameron Montgomery (So.)	
WR	28	Aaron Cephus (So.)	83	Rhett Cardwell (So.)	
LT	77	Uzoma Osuji (So.)	63	Brandt Peterson (Fr.)	
LG	79	Joseph Dill (Jr.)	74	Jack Greene (So.)	
C	58	Shea Baker (Fr.)	53	Cole Elms (Jr.)	
RG	60	Crockett Mokry (Jr.)	68	Gregor MacKellar (Fr.)	
RT	**76**	**Sam Pierce (Sr.)**	75	Matt Terrill (Jr.)	
QB	14	Jackson Tyner (Jr.)	4	Sam Glaesmann (So.)	
RB	33	Emmanuel Esukpa (Jr.)	**2**	**Austin Walter (Sr.)**	
FB	35	Will Phillips (So.)	7	Jordan Myers (So.)	

DEFENSE (5)

DE	93	Parker Hanusa (Sr.)	40	Brady Wright (Sr.)
DT	**95**	**Roe Wilkins (Jr.)**	36	Myles Adams (Jr.)
NT	**96**	**Zach Abercrumbia (Jr.)**	91	Carl Thompson (Jr.)
RUSH	94	Graysen Schantz (Sr.)	40	Brady Wright (Sr.)
OLB	33	Anthony Ekpe (So.)	10	Kenneth Orji (Fr.)
MLB	**31**	**Martin Nwakamma (Sr.)**	42	Dylan James (So.)
OLB	8	Dylan Silcox (So.)	41	Randall Royall (Fr.)
CB	**3**	**Brandon Douglas-Dotson (Sr.)**	23	Isaiah Richardson (So.)
CB	12	D'Angelo Ellis (Jr.)	**7**	**Justin Bickham (Jr.)**
FS	20	George Nyakwol (So.)	9	Jorian Clark (Sr.)
SS	29	Houston Robert (Jr.)	5	Dasharm Newsome (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	25	Will Harrison (So.)	KR	10	Austin Trammell (So.)
P	2	Jack Fox (Sr.)	PR	10	Austin Trammell (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Miklo Smalls, 75-43-623-6, 1 TD
Rushing: Nahshon Ellerbe, 85 att., 409 yds., 6 TDs
Receiving: Aaron Cephus, 25 rec., 622 yds., 5 TDs
Tackles: Martin Nwakamma, 40
Sacks: Roe Wilkins, 6.5
Interceptions: Justin Bickham, Brandon Douglas-Dotson, 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mike Bloomgren
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: First Season
Offensive Coordinator: Jerry Mack
Defensive Coordinator: Brian Smith
Houston, TX • Rice Stadium (47,000)

Maria Lysaker/Rice Athletics Communications

Southern Miss **Golden Eagles**

National Forecast: **92** • C-USA West Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **7-5, 5-3 C-USA**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Jackson State
Sept.	8	UL Monroe
Sept.	15	at Appalachian State
Sept.	22	Rice
Sept.	29	at Auburn
Oct.	13	at North Texas
Oct.	20	UTSA
Oct.	27	at Charlotte
Nov.	3	Marshall
Nov.	10	at UAB
Nov.	17	Louisiana Tech
Nov.	24	at UTEP

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 6-2 C-USA

Sept.	2	Kentucky	L	17-24
Sept.	9	Southern	W	45-0
Sept.	16	at UL Monroe	W	28-17
Sept.	30	North Texas	L	28-43
Oct.	7	at UTSA	W	31-29
Oct.	14	UTEP	W	24-0
Oct.	21	at Louisiana Tech	W	34-27
Oct.	28	UAB	L	12-30
Nov.	4	at Tennessee	L	10-24
Nov.	11	at Rice	W	43-34
Nov.	18	Charlotte	W	66-21
Nov.	25	at Marshall	W	28-27
Dec.	27	vs. Florida State #	L	13-42

#Independence Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Deuntra Hyman, DE, Meridian, MS
2. JJ Jones, CB, Brookhaven, MS
3. Nick Dawson, DL, McDonough, GA
4. Curry Benn, CB, New Orleans, LA
5. Neil McLaurin, WR, Laurel, MS*
6. Jack Abraham, QB, Oxford, MS*
7. Ethan Edmondson, DE, Scottsboro, AL
8. Trace Clopton, C, Brookhaven, MS
9. Trivenskey Mosley, RB, Shreveport, LA
10. Tate Whatley, QB, Lakeland, FL

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	29.2 ppg	4	56
Rushing	184.5 ypg	4	41
Passing	240.1 ypg	4	55
Total	424.6 ypg	3	43
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	24.5 ppg	4	45
Rushing	138.5 ypg	4	37
Passing	193.5 ypg	3	25
Total	331.9 ypg	2	20
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
-1	-0.08	5	72

STAT CORNER

-1

USM's turnover margin went from minus-17 in 2016 to minus-1 in 2017 — minus-4 in five losses and plus-3 in eight wins.

OFFENSE Southern Miss never settled on a QB in 2017, alternating between Kwadra Griggs (5–2 as a starter) and Keon Howard (3–3) depending largely on which guy was healthier from one week to the next. That uncertainty continued into the spring, when Howard split first-team reps with a junior college transfer, Jack Abraham, while Griggs rehabbed an injury. The slight edge heading into the fall probably goes to Griggs, who finished with 19 total TDs and just two interceptions in his first season in the lineup. But Abraham will have every opportunity to supplant the holdovers, as will redshirt freshman Marcelo Rodriguez and incoming signee Tate Whatley.

The rest of the offense is even more of a blank slate: At the skill positions alone, the exodus includes the second-leading rusher in school history (Ito Smith) and all three starters at wide receiver. In the backfield, at least, there's experience — seniors Tez Parks, George Payne and T'Rod Daniels boast over 2,000 career yards from scrimmage among them. Still, most of that production belongs to Payne, a sixth-year player who's sat out two of the past three seasons with injuries, and the new receiving corps consists almost entirely of sophomores.

The line is more predictable, thanks the return of starters Ty Pollard, Arvin Fletcher and Drake Dorbeck.

DEFENSE USM is also replacing most of last year's personnel on defense, beginning with outgoing coordinator Tony Pecoraro, who left for the same position at C-USA rival Florida Atlantic just before the start of spring practice. Pecoraro's successor is Tim Billings, promoted from safeties coach. His first order of business is rebuilding the secondary: All five of last year's regulars graduated, leaving only two players — sophomore Rachaun Mitchell and senior Picasso Nelson Jr. — who have seen any relevant playing time. Nelson, a three-year starter who took a medical redshirt in 2017, returned to full speed in the spring and looks like a lock to resume his old nickel role.

The outlook is better along the front seven, especially at defensive end, where senior bookends LaDarius Harris and Darian Yancey have combined for 41 career starts, and linebacker, where Racheem Boothe earned Freshman All-America notices as a redshirt.

SPECIALISTS Senior Parker Shaunfield has one of the biggest legs in the league, connecting on all four of his field goal attempts beyond 40 yards last year en route to a first-team All-C-USA nod. Punting duties will fall again to Zac Everett, who averaged 40.6 yards with just four touchbacks in 64 attempts.

FINAL ANALYSIS For years Southern Miss was a beacon of stability. But most of the past decade has been defined by volatility, and despite winning records in each of coach Jay Hopson's first two seasons, it's been hard to predict which team will show up on a given Saturday. With good health, consistency at quarterback and a few breaks, every game on the schedule is winnable outside of a non-conference trip to Auburn. Yet that's been the case the past two years, too, and both of those teams wound up third in C-USA's West Division.

The influx of new starters and ongoing uncertainty behind center make the 2018 forecast even hazier. Settling on a reliable week-in, week-out starter will be the top priority; if Griggs, Abraham, or one of the younger players emerges as that guy, filling the vacancies around him should be par for the course. If not, the absence of an all-purpose workhorse on the level of Smith will likely loom very large.



KWADRA GRIGGS

"They're mean on defense, and they evaluate talent aggressively so that they can make the best of recruiting underneath the SEC."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	16	Quez Watkins (So.)	82	Trevor Terry (Jr.)
WR	87	Tim Jones (So.)	13	Neil McLaurin (Jr.)
WR	3	Jaylond Adams (So.)	18	De'Michael Harris (Jr.)
LT	**79**	**Drake Dorbeck (Jr.)**	71	Paul Gainer (So.)
LG	**63**	**Arvin Fletcher (So.)**	75	Travion Clayton (So.)
C	57	Trace Clopton (Fr.)	67	Hayden Sturdevant (So.)
RG	**76**	**Ty Pollard (Jr.)**	66	Wyatt Richthofen (So.)
RT	50	Woodlyson Alcius (So.)	73	Tairek Johnson (Jr.)
TE	**1**	**Jay'Shawn Washington (Sr.)**	12	Steven Anderson (Fr.)
QB	**7**	**Kwadra Griggs (Sr.)**	2	Keon Howard (Jr.)
RB	8	Tez Parks (Sr.)	28	T'Rod Daniels (Sr.)

DEFENSE (3)

DE	**43**	**LaDarius Harris (Sr.)**	99	Jacques Turner (So.)
DT	17	Delmond Landry (Sr.)	55	Demarrio Smith (Jr.)
DT		Isaiah Johnson (Jr.)	51	Von'Darius Freeman (Jr.)
DE	22	Darian Yancey (Sr.)	30	Paxton Schrimsher (Jr.)
LB	**41**	**Racheem Boothe (So.)**	5	Walden Davis III (Sr.)
LB	**26**	**Jeremy Sangster (Sr.)**	37	Sherrod Ruff (Sr.)
CB	21	Rachaun Mitchell (So.)	29	Ernest Gunn (Jr.)
CB	7	Ty Williams (Jr.)		Jemaurian Jones (Fr.)
NB	13	Picasso Nelson Jr. (Sr.)	39	WyDale Flott (So.)
S	1	Xavier Marion (Sr.)		Nicario Harper (Fr.)
S	46	Tyler Barnes (So.)		Ky'el Hemby (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	21	Parker Shaunfield (Sr.)	**KR**	28 T'Rod Daniels (Sr.)
P	29	Zac Everett (Jr.)	**PR**	16 Quez Watkins (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Kwadra Griggs, 265-148-1,879-2, 16 TDs
Rushing: Tez Parks, 53 att., 272 yds., 1 TD
Receiving: Quez Watkins, 23 rec., 337 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Racheem Boothe, 79
Sacks: Paxton Schrimsher, 5.5
Interceptions: None

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Jay Hopson
Record at School: 15-11 (2 years)
Career Record: 47–28 (6 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Shannon Dawson
Defensive Coordinators: Tim Billings, Derek Nicholson
Hattiesburg, MS • M.M. Roberts Stadium (36,000)

Courtesy Southern Miss Athletics

UAB Blazers

National Forecast: **84** • C-USA West Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **8-4, 6-2 C-USA**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Savannah State
Sept.	8	at Coastal Carolina
Sept.	15	Tulane
Sept.	29	Charlotte
Oct.	6	at Louisiana Tech
Oct.	13	at Rice
Oct.	20	North Texas
Oct.	27	at UTEP
Nov.	3	UTSA
Nov.	10	Southern Miss
Nov.	17	at Texas A&M
Nov.	24	at Middle Tennessee

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 6-2 C-USA

Sept.	2	Alabama A&M	W	38-7
Sept.	9	at Ball State	L	31-51
Sept.	16	Coastal Carolina	W	30-23
Sept.	23	at North Texas	L	43-46
Oct.	7	Louisiana Tech	W	23-22
Oct.	14	Middle Tennessee	W	25-23
Oct.	21	at Charlotte (ot)	L	24-25
Oct.	28	at Southern Miss	W	30-12
Nov.	4	Rice	W	52-21
Nov.	11	at UTSA	W	24-19
Nov.	18	at Florida	L	7-36
Nov.	25	UTEP	W	28-7
Dec.	22	vs. Ohio #	L	6-41

#Bahamas Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. CD Daniels, CB, Birmingham, AL
2. Jalen Rayam, OLB, Alabaster, AL
3. Starling Thomas V, CB, Birmingham, AL
4. Michael Fairbanks, DE, Powder Springs, GA
5. Jaylen Key, DE, Tallahassee, FL
6. Danyton Thomas, CB, Opelika, AL
7. Dylan Hopkins, QB, Maryville, TN
8. Xavier Lanier, CB, Gordo, AL
9. Deshaun Oliver, S, Birmingham, AL
10. Austin Watkins, WR, North Fort Myers, FL*

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	27.8 ppg	5	71
Rushing	183.2 ypg	5	44
Passing	180.5 ypg	10	100
Total	363.8 ypg	10	98
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	25.6 ppg	7	55
Rushing	175.9 ypg	8	80
Passing	189.7 ypg	2	22
Total	365.6 ypg	5	41
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
+4	+0.31	4	40

STAT CORNER

100

UAB returns 100% of its QB passing yards, 100% of its RB rushing yards, and 99% of its WR/TE receiving yards in 2018.

OFFENSE UAB returns most of an offense that ranked 10th in Conference USA, but the Blazers will have a new look after coach Bill Clark dismissed coordinator Les Koenning and re-hired Bryant Vincent, the architect of the program's 2014 attack that set several school records.

Quarterback A.J. Erdely could contend for league honors after producing 29 total touchdowns in 2017. Conference USA Freshman of the Year Spencer Brown returns after rushing for 1,329 yards (the most ever by a UAB freshman), and the unit will be even better with Ole Miss transfer Jarrion Street and former Michigan Wolverine Kingston Davis supplying depth.

Most of the key receivers are back, including top pass catcher Andre Wilson and fellow seniors Collin Lisa, Xavier Ubosi and Sederian Copeland. UAB hopes to have slot receiver Jonathan Haden back from a knee injury before the season, and Clark signed junior college transfers Austin Watkins and Kendall Parham to challenge for time. The tight end position is deep as senior Donnie Lee moved from running back after catching 19 passes, joining returning key players Hayden Pittman and Logan Scott as well as two players who missed last season due to injury, Thair Blakes and Skylor Clinton.

Rishard Cook lost 35 pounds in the offseason and is primed for a starting role at left guard after starting four games last year.

DEFENSE The defense returns several key players but must replace team leaders such as Darious Williams, Shaq Jones and Tevin Crews, who were each with the program before it was shut down in 2014.

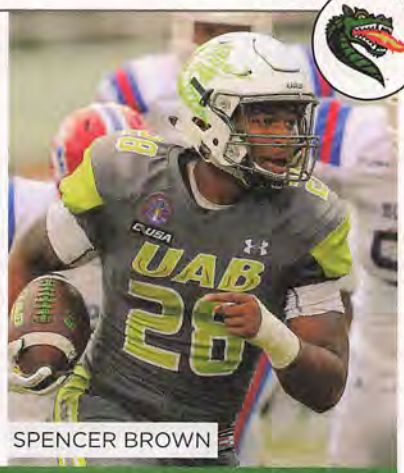
Safety Broderick Thomas established himself as one of the conference's top defenders in his first year with the program, and he'll be counted on for leadership and big plays in a secondary that will rely on young players to provide depth behind veterans Duke Culver, Will Dawkins, D.A. Williams and Brontae Harris. UAB trains its defensive backs to play multiple positions.

UAB was at its best when 6'7" Stacy Keely was healthy last year. He has moved to the Jack linebacker spot and should be one of C-USA's best edge rushers. The defensive line is a powerful group led by breakout candidate Garrett Marino, Anthony Rush and Quindarius Thagard. Watch for Blake McClain, who missed last year due to injury, and newcomers Antonio Moultrie and Fish McWilliams to contribute early.

Sophomore linebacker Thomas Johnston turned down Power 5 offers to sign with UAB. Fitzgerald Mofor and Chris Woolbright are also experienced, but UAB needs youngsters behind them to step up.

SPECIALISTS UAB returns kicker Nick Vogel and punter Joel Dixon, though both could stand to improve. UAB was 13th in Conference USA in net punting, and while Vogel was perfect on field goals inside of 40 yards, he was just 5-of-9 past that mark. Wilson is UAB's top weapon in the return game.

FINAL ANALYSIS UAB was expected to be one of the worst teams in the FBS ranks after returning from a two-year hiatus. Didn't happen. The Blazers won eight games overall and went 6–2 in the league, cementing Clark's reputation as one of the most underrated coaches in the nation. Expectations will be high this year, due in part to the return of Vincent as the offensive coordinator and a defense that should remain stout despite the loss of some key personnel. This team should be a factor in the C-USA West title chase.



SPENCER BROWN

"Not enough can be said about the incredible job done by Bill Clark. But now we know what they're capable of, and they aren't creeping up on anyone this year."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)

WR	3	**Andre Wilson (Sr.)**	6	Austin Watkins (Jr.)
WR	7	Xavier Ubosi (Sr.)	84	Justin Walker (Sr.)
WR	13	Collin Lisa (Sr.)	10	Sederian Copeland (Sr.)
LT	51	**James Davis (Sr.)**	53	Colby Ragland (Jr.)
LG	71	Rishard Cook (Sr.)	50	David Galten (Jr.)
C	72	**Lee Dufour (Jr.)**	55	Andrew Smith (Jr.)
RG	58	**Malique Johnson (Sr.)**	73	Patrick Nuss (Fr.)
RT	57	**Justice Powers (Sr.)**	74	Bryant Novick (Sr.)
TE	44	**Logan Scott (Sr.)**	38	Hayden Pittman (So.)
QB	11	**A.J. Erdely (Sr.)**	17	Tyler Johnston III (So.)
RB	28	**Spencer Brown (So.)**	5	Jarrion Street (Jr.)

DEFENSE (6)

DE	5	Zachary Williams (Sr.)	92	Antonio Moultrie (So.)
NT	47	Anthony Rush (Sr.)	41	Quindarius Thagard (Sr.)
DT	44	**Garrett Marino (Jr.)**	95	Blake McClain (Sr.)
LB	97	**Stacy Keely (Sr.)**	99	Jamell Garcia-Williams (Sr.)
LB	7	Thomas Johnston (So.)	20	Kris Moll (So.)
LB	52	**Fitzgerald Mofor (Jr.)**	27	Chris Woolbright (Sr.)
CB	33	Brontae Harris (So.)	14	Dy'Jonn Turner (So.)
CB	1	**D.A. Williams (Sr.)**	17	Will Boler (Fr.)
FS	22	**Broderick Thomas (Sr.)**	11	David Acfalle (Fr.)
SS	21	**Will Dawkins (Jr.)**	2	Mar'Sean Diggs (Sr.)
STAR	8	Duke Culver (Sr.)	12	Grayson Cash (Fr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	19	Nick Vogel (Jr.)	KR	18	Kailon Carter (Sr.)
P	37	Joel Dixon (Jr.)	PR	3	Andre Wilson (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: A.J. Erdely, 338-205-2,331-4, 16 TDs
Rushing: Spencer Brown, 250 att., 1,329 yds., 10 TDs
Receiving: Andre Wilson, 54 rec., 677 yds., 6 TDs
Tackles: Broderick Thomas, 95
Sacks: Stacy Keely, 4.0
Interceptions: Broderick Thomas, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Bill Clark
Record at School: 14-11 (2 years)
Career Record: 25-15 (3 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Bryant Vincent
Defensive Coordinator: David Reeves
Birmingham, AL • Legion Field (72,000)

Jimmy Mitchell/UAB Athletics

UTEP Miners

National Forecast: **130** • C-USA West Prediction: **7** • Projected Record: **1-11, 0-8 C-USA**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Northern Arizona
Sept.	8	at UNLV
Sept.	15	at Tennessee
Sept.	22	New Mexico State
Sept.	29	at UTSA
Oct.	6	North Texas
Oct.	20	at Louisiana Tech
Oct.	27	UAB
Nov.	3	at Rice
Nov.	10	Middle Tennessee
Nov.	17	at Western Kentucky
Nov.	24	Southern Miss

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 0-12, 0-8 C-USA

Sept.	2	at Oklahoma	L	7-56
Sept.	9	Rice	L	14-31
Sept.	15	Arizona	L	16-63
Sept.	23	at New Mexico State	L	14-41
Sept.	30	at Army	L	21-35
Oct.	7	Western Kentucky	L	14-15
Oct.	14	at Southern Miss	L	0-24
Oct.	28	UTSA	L	14-31
Nov.	4	at Middle Tennessee	L	3-30
Nov.	11	at North Texas	L	10-45
Nov.	18	Louisiana Tech	L	21-42
Nov.	25	at UAB	L	7-28

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Kai Locksley, QB, Fort Washington, MD*
2. Andrew Nwachukwu, WR, Wylie, TX
3. Justin Garrett, WR, Compton, CA
4. Ray Walters, ATH, Los Angeles, CA
5. Ryan Warren, ATH, Gilbert, AZ
6. Justin Prince, S, Inglewood, CA
7. Chris Love, OT, Tujunga, CA
8. Cameron Cooper, OT, Aurora, CO
9. Tres Barboza, OT, Castroville, TX*
10. Josh Caldwell, CB, Norwalk, CA

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	11.8 ppg	14	130
Rushing	95.6 ypg	13	127
Passing	134.9 ypg	14	121
Total	230.5 ypg	14	130
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	36.8 ppg	14	119
Rushing	234.3 ypg	14	120
Passing	212.3 ypg	6	48
Total	446.6 ypg	13	108
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
-6	-0.50	8	103

STAT CORNER

4.1

UTEP went from averaging 6.0 yards per play in 2016 (47th in FBS) to just 4.1 in 2017 (last), the second-largest drop in the country.

OFFENSE UTEP's disastrous 2017 was all about its offense. The coordinator was fired three weeks in, head coach Sean Kugler was out the door two weeks after that, and the Miners went on to finish dead last nationally in points scored and yards gained. That led to a coaching search, and there was never any doubt that the hire — in this case Kansas State offensive coordinator Dana Dimel — was going to have a mind for offense. "We're taking over an offense that was [last in the nation]. The concerns are on offense," Dimel says. "We want to develop the offensive line and wide receiver positions and quarterback. Those are the three biggest things."

Quarterback is obviously the first priority, and to that end, one of Dimel's first coups was getting NJCAA Offensive Player of the Year Kai Locksley to transfer in from Iowa Western. Locksley, however, did not secure the job in the spring, as Ryan Metz, the closest thing to an incumbent, actually seemed to have a slight edge. Metz has been good when put into reasonable situations, which did not happen at any point last season.

Elsewhere on the offense, there's a lot returning. The stable of running backs includes Quardraiz Wadley, Joshua Fields and running-back-turned-linebacker-turned-running-back-again Treyvon Hughes, as UTEP will take another stab at replacing all-time rushing leader Aaron Jones, now two years gone.

There are a lot of receivers back, none of whom were particularly productive in 2017, but a new offense that actually uses them could only help. Warren Redix, Kavika Johnson and Eddie Sinegal have seen the field a lot in their careers, if not the ball. If UTEP is to make a jump, it has to start in the passing attack.

The line will build around center Derron Gatewood and tackles Jerrod Brooks and Greg Long. UTEP will looks for new guards, including one to replace the school's best-ever lineman, Will Hernandez.

DEFENSE Until last year, the defense was the scapegoat for all the Miners' struggles, but it was actually decent last year, especially considering how much it had to be on the field.

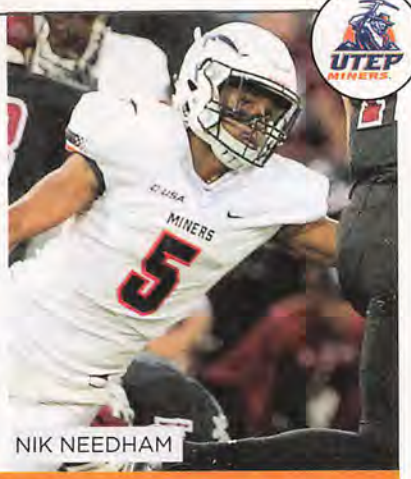
Much is back, but as seems to happen every other year, the system is changing, this time to a 4-2-5.

Having five defensive backs on the field fits UTEP's personnel. The secondary will be anchored by a cornerback trio of Nik Needham, Kalon Beverly and Justin Rogers that is as good as any in Conference USA. The safety position also starts strong with Michael Lewis and Kahani Smith.

The questions, as always, are on the defensive line, which has rarely been productive for a stretch that dates back before the current candidates were born. Denzel Chukwukelu, Trace Mascorro and Chris Richardson had good springs on the line, while a large cast of linebackers who saw time in last year's 3-4 compete for those two spots.

SPECIALISTS All is wide open, except at punt returner, where Terry Juniel could be one of the better ones in C-USA. Jason Filley rates as an incumbent at placekicker. UTEP struggled there last season until he settled down a bit late, though true freshman Gavin Baechle will be expected to compete.

FINAL ANALYSIS Things can only get better, both for a new-look offense that will put a premium on creativity, and for the final record, where any wins would represent infinite progress. Wins figure to be hard to come by, but a step forward shouldn't be, as UTEP begins a massive rebuild.



NIK NEEDHAM

"It's fair to say Dana Dimel will use a lot of basic K-State concepts. They'll run QB option from the shotgun. They'll run a lot of misdirection."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (2)					
WR	10	Warren Redix (Sr.)	11	Erik Brown (Sr.)	
WR	7	Kavika Johnson (Sr.)	26	Walter Dawn (Jr.)	
WR	2	Terry Juniel (Sr.)	21	Eddie Sinegal (Jr.)	
LT	77	Greg Long (So.)	55	Gamaliel Barbosa (Jr.)	
LG	**61**	**Ruben Guerra (Jr.)**	73	Bobby DeHaro (Fr.)	
C	**65**	**Derron Gatewood (Sr.)**	78	Jaime Perales (Fr.)	
RG	74	Bijan Hosseini (Sr.)	77	Greg Long (So.)	
RT	72	Jerrod Brooks (Sr.)	55	Gamaliel Barbosa (Jr.)	
TE	18	David Lucero (Sr.)	86	Josh Weeks (Jr.)	
QB	12	Ryan Metz (Sr.)	1	Kai Locksley (Jr.)	
RB	4	Quardraiz Wadley (Jr.)	19	Treyvon Hughes (Jr.)	
DEFENSE (5)					
DE	**11**	**Denzel Chukwukelu (Jr.)**	59	Dedrick Simpson (So.)	
DT	55	Mike Sota (Sr.)	85	Sani Buckingham (Jr.)	
DT	99	Chris Richardson (Jr.)	32	Christian Johnson (So.)	
DE	**95**	**Trace Mascorro (So.)**	92	Christian Buckingham (Sr.)	
LB	6	Dylan Parsee (Jr.)	29	Jamar Smith (Sr.)	
LB	9	Jayson VanHook (Jr.)	3	Sione Tupou (So.)	
CB	**5**	**Nik Needham (Sr.)**	12	Adrian Hynson (Sr.)	
CB	**1**	**Kalon Beverly (Sr.)**	14	Tyson Wilson (Fr.)	
CB	13	Justin Rogers (Jr.)	27	Joseph Pickney (So.)	
S	**24**	**Kahani Smith (Sr.)**	18	Jerrell Brown (Jr.)	
S	2	Michael Lewis (Jr.)	21	Justin Prince (So.)	
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K		Gavin Baechle (Fr.)	**KR**	2 Terry Juniel (Sr.)	
P		Mitchell Crawford (Fr.)	**PR**	2 Terry Juniel (Sr.)	

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Ryan Metz, 130-63-637-6, 3 TDs
Rushing: Joshua Fields, 89 att., 362 yds., 2 TDs
Receiving: Terry Juniel, 23 rec., 224 yds., 0 TDs
Tackles: Nik Needham, 59
Sacks: Three players tied with 1.0
Interceptions: Kahani Smith, 2; Justin Rogers, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Dana Dimel
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: 30-39 (6 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Mike Canales
Defensive Coordinator: Mike Cox
El Paso, TX • Sun Bowl (51,500)

Courtesy UTEP Athletics

UTSA **Roadrunners**

National Forecast: **104** • C-USA West Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **5-7, 4-4 C-USA**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at Arizona State
Sept.	8	Baylor
Sept.	15	at Kansas State
Sept.	22	Texas State
Sept.	29	UTEP
Oct.	6	at Rice
Oct.	13	Louisiana Tech
Oct.	20	at Southern Miss
Nov.	3	at UAB
Nov.	10	FIU
Nov.	17	at Marshall
Nov.	24	North Texas

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 6-5, 3-5 C-USA

Sept.	9	at Baylor	W	17-10
Sept.	16	Southern	W	51-17
Sept.	23	at Texas State	W	44-14
Oct.	7	Southern Miss	L	29-31
Oct.	14	at North Texas	L	26-29
Oct.	21	Rice	W	20-7
Oct.	28	at UTEP	W	31-14
Nov.	4	at FIU	L	7-14
Nov.	11	UAB	L	19-24
Nov.	18	Marshall	W	9-7
Nov.	25	at Louisiana Tech	L	6-20

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Deven Boston, RB, Buena Park, CA*
2. Spencer Burford, OT, San Antonio, TX
3. Tykee Ogle-Kellogg, WR, Alcoa, TN
4. Trumane Bell, LB, Dallas, TX
5. Sheldon Jones, WR, New Orleans, LA
6. Brenden Brady, RB, Cibolo, TX
7. Corey Mayfield Jr., CB, Forney, TX
8. Brandon Matterson, DT, San Antonio, TX
9. Lorenzo Dantzler, DE, Starkville, MS*
10. TJ King, DE, Irving, TX*

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	C-USA	NATIONAL
Scoring	23.5 ppg	10	104
Rushing	184.6 ypg	3	40
Passing	202.8 ypg	9	85
Total	387.4 ypg	8	82
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	17.0 ppg	1	8
Rushing	127.7 ypg	2	22
Passing	160.1 ypg	1	2
Total	287.8 ypg	1	5
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**C-USA**	**NATIONAL**
+4	+0.36	3	34

STAT CORNER

8.4

Opponents averaged 8.4 yards to go on third downs, fourth most in FBS. The pass rush had plenty of chances to pin its ears back.

OFFENSE Veteran coordinator Al Borges was brought in to fix an underachieving unit that failed to reach the end zone in the 2017 season's final two games. Unfortunately, there isn't a lot of returning experience for an offense that finished 104th in the nation in scoring at 23.5 points per game. There will be a new starting quarterback in place, and the competition will continue into the fall. Junior college transfer Cordale Grundy is a dual threat with a strong arm, and he is competing with Bryce Rivers, a pocket-passer who had a handful of snaps backing up three-year starter Dalton Sturm last season. Redshirt freshman Frank Harris was off to an excellent start in spring practice before tearing his ACL.

The offense likely will again emphasize the ground game, which ranked 40th nationally with 184.6 rushing yards per game. Senior Jalen Rhodes, who split carries a year ago but still led the team with 659 yards and five TDs, will be the workhorse. He will have two returning starters along the offensive line in front of him, plus impressive part-time starter Dominic Pastucci.

The wide receiving crew will be relatively new, though Greg Campbell Jr. and Marquez McNair, the nephew of late NFL star Steve McNair, saw significant action in 2017. The coaching staff is high on tight end Chance McLeod both as a receiver and blocker.

DEFENSE The Roadrunners' defense finished fifth in the nation in yards allowed, but two key pieces have departed. One is end Marcus Davenport, who is off to the NFL after a stellar career. The other is coordinator Pete Golding, who was plucked by Alabama to join the Crimson Tide's defensive staff. Still, while the unit may not be quite as dominant, look for UTSA to be strong again with five starters back.

The line loses Davenport, but three other regulars are back, and end Kevin Strong Jr. may follow Davenport as a first-team All-C-USA selection and NFL Draft pick. Juniors Eric Banks and Baylen Baker are also back, and King Newton, son of six-time NFL Pro Bowler Nate Newton, slides into the nose tackle role.

New defensive coordinator Jason Rollins will keep a 4-2-5 alignment, and junior Josiah Tauaefa will lead the small corps of linebackers. A Freshman All-American in 2016, Tauaefa was injured for portions of 2017 and should make a big impact if he stays healthy.

Returning safeties, Carl Austin III and C.J. Levine, could earn All-C-USA recognition, and reliable veteran Darryl Godfrey will become the team's third starting safety. The cornerback spot will be boosted by the return of Teddrick McGhee, who started as a freshman in 2016 and missed all of 2017 due to injury.

SPECIALISTS Both kicking spots are in excellent shape. Sophomore Jared Sackett was a Lou Groza semifinalist after nailing 19-of-22 field goal attempts, including 5-of-7 from beyond 40 yards. Senior Yannis Routsas was a Ray Guy semifinalist with a net punting average of 39.4 yards.

FINAL ANALYSIS UTSA will again hang its hat on defense. The Roadrunners may feel like they let an opportunity get away last season when a veteran group dropped four games by seven points or fewer en route to a 6–5 record. This year, three Power 5 opponents greet a rebuilding UTSA squad to open the year, so a slow start may be in the cards. However, the talent is there, especially on defense, for this team to be a factor in the C-USA race. By the end of the season, if a quarterback emerges, the Roadrunners could be dangerous.



JALEN RHODES

Jeff Huehn/UTSA Athletics

"Their entire offense is gone — QB, WR, RB, but Frank (Wilson) has recruited at such a level that they'll be more talented at those positions soon."

— An opposing C-USA assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (3)

WR	10	Greg Campbell Jr. (Sr.)	84	Larry Stephens (Sr.)
WR	4	Marquez McNair (Sr.)	18	Peyton Hall (Sr.)
WR	19	Blaze Moorhead (Jr.)	11	Tykee Ogle-Kellogg (Fr.)
LT	**64**	**Josh Dunlop (Jr.)**	65	Treyvion Shannon (Jr.)
LG	**53**	**Jordan Wright (Sr.)**	75	Bosah Osakwe (So.)
C	61	Kevin Davis (Fr.)	53	Jordan Wright (Sr.)
RG	66	Dominic Pastucci (So.)	73	David Anzaldua (Sr.)
RT	70	Jalyn Galmore (Jr.)	78	Josh Oatis (So.)
TE	83	Chance McCleod (So.)	98	T.J. King (Jr.)
QB	14	Cordale Grundy (Jr.)	17	Bryce Rivers (So.)
RB	**5**	**Jalen Rhodes (Sr.)**	33	B.J. Daniels (So.)

DEFENSE (5)

DE	90	Eric Banks (Jr.)	94	Solomon Wise (So.)
DT	**99**	**Baylen Baker (Jr.)**	95	Jaylon Haynes (So.)
NT	92	King Newton (Jr.)	96	Jim Philistin (Jr.)
DE	**54**	**Kevin Strong Jr. (Sr.)**	91	Jarrod Carter-McLin (Jr.)
LB	**55**	**Josiah Tauaefa (Jr.)**	52	Zachary Didomenico (Fr.)
LB	44	Les Maruo (Sr.)	43	Donovan Perkins (Fr.)
CB	27	Teddrick McGhee (So.)	35	Avery Jackson (So.)
CB	29	Clayton Johnson (Jr.)	28	Javontavius Mosley (So.)
FS	**25**	**Carl Austin III (Sr.)**	12	Andrew Martel (Jr.)
SS	**14**	**C.J. Levine (Sr.)**	17	Vance Vallair (Fr.)
SS	23	Darryl Godfrey (Sr.)	21	Brenndan Johnson (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	42	Jared Sackett (So.)	**KR**	20	Brett Winnegan (Sr.)
P	39	Yannis Routsas (Sr.)	**PR**	4	Marquez McNair (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Bryce Rivers, 8-5-43-2, 0 TDs
Rushing: Jalen Rhodes, 134 att., 659 yds., 5 TDs
Receiving: Greg Campbell Jr., 27 rec., 300 yds., 0 TDs
Tackles: Carl Austin III, 48
Sacks: Kevin Strong Jr. 3.0
Interceptions: Clayton Johnson, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Frank Wilson
Record at School: 12-12 (2 years)
Career Record: 12-12 (2 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Al Borges
Defensive Coordinator: Jason Rollins
San Antonio, TX • Alamodome (65,000)

MAC PREVIEW

East	Predicted Order of Finish	West
	**1** OHIO **BOBCATS** 10-3, 6-2 MAC	**1** NORTHERN ILLINOIS **HUSKIES** 7-6, 7-1 MAC 
	**2** MIAMI **REDHAWKS** 6-6, 5-3 MAC	**2** TOLEDO **ROCKETS** 8-4, 6-2 MAC 
	**3** BUFFALO **BULLS** 7-5, 5-3 MAC	**3** WESTERN MICHIGAN **BRONCOS** 6-6, 4-4 MAC 
	**4** AKRON **ZIPS** 5-7, 4-4 MAC	**4** CENTRAL MICHIGAN **CHIPPEWAS** 5-7, 4-4 MAC 
	**5** BOWLING GREEN **FALCONS** 3-9, 2-6 MAC	**5** EASTERN MICHIGAN **EAGLES** 4-8, 3-5 MAC 
	**6** KENT STATE **GOLDEN FLASHES** 1-11, 0-8 MAC	**6** BALL STATE **CARDINALS** 3-9, 2-6 MAC 

MAC Championship: **Ohio over Northern Illinois**

GAMES TO WATCH

SEPT. 1
NIU AT IOWA
Last September, the Huskies dropped two games to Power 5 foes by a total of seven points; they'd love to break through in Week 1 in Iowa City.

SEPT. 8
WMU AT MICHIGAN
Western Michigan has made four previous trips to the Big House. The average score in those games: Michigan 35, Western Michigan 13.

SEPT. 8
KANSAS AT CMU
The Chips rolled up 590 yards in a 45–27 win at Kansas last September. They will be favored to complete the sweep in Mount Pleasant.

SEPT. 15
MIAMI (FLA.) AT TOLEDO
Toledo led the Hurricanes 16–10 at the half last season (before losing 52–30). Expect the Rockets to put up a good fight at the Glass Bowl.

SEPT. 22
BUFFALO AT RUTGERS
The Bulls will be eager to show they've taken a step forward when they make the trip to Rutgers. Buffalo shocked the Knights in 2002, 34–11.

SEPT. 29
TOLEDO AT FRESNO STATE
Two weeks after the big home game against Miami, the Rockets head to the West Coast to take on a very good Fresno State team.

Akron: Jeff Harwell/University of Akron; WMU: Gary Shook; Miami: Ricardo Trevino; EMU: Steve King/EMUEaglesPhoto.com; Ball State: Michael Hickey; Rourke: Lauren Bacho | Ohio Athletics; Buffalo: Paul Hokanson/UBBulls.com; NIU: Chris Anderson/NIU; All others courtesy of each school's athletic department

2018 Unit Rankings

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
AKRON	5	11	10	10	9	4	7
BALL STATE	8	2	6	11	12	10	12
BOWLING GREEN	7	10	4	9	10	8	10
BUFFALO	3	7	2	6	5	2	9
CENTRAL MICHIGAN	11	4	11	8	3	3	6
EASTERN MICHIGAN	10	8	9	5	2	11	5
KENT STATE	12	12	12	12	11	9	11
MIAMI	2	5	8	3	4	1	4
NORTHERN ILLINOIS	4	9	7	2	1	5	1
OHIO	1	1	3	1	6	6	3
TOLEDO	9	2	1	7	7	7	2
WESTERN MICHIGAN	6	3	5	4	8	12	8

Recruiting by School

1. Toledo
2. Western Michigan
3. Bowling Green
4. Northern Illinois
5. Kent State
6. Eastern Michigan
7. Ball State
8. Akron
9. Central Michigan
10. Ohio
11. Miami
12. Buffalo


NATHAN ROURKE, OHIO


DIONTAE JOHNSON, TOLEDO

2018 Bowl Projections

Boca Raton Bowl: Ohio vs. Middle Tennessee

Dollar General Bowl: Northern Illinois vs. Arkansas State

Frisco Bowl: Toledo vs. Tulane

Camellia: Miami (Ohio) vs. Troy

Famous Idaho Potato Bowl: Buffalo vs. Fresno State

MAC Coordinator Carousel

Akron: Defense
New: TBD
Old: Chuck Amato

Bowling Green: Defense
New: Carl Pelini
Old: Perry Eliano

Kent State: Offense
New: Andrew Sowder
Old: Don Treadwell

Kent State: Defense
New: Tom Kaufman
Old: Ben Needham

Miami: Defense
New: John Hauser, Spence Nowinsky
Old: John Hauser, Matt Pawlowski

Northern Illinois: Defense
New: Jeff Knowles
Old: Kevin Kane

WMU: Offense
New: Jake Moreland
Old: Jake Moreland, Kevin Johns

OCT. 13
OHIO AT NIU
Could this be a preview of the MAC Championship Game? Both the Bobcats and Huskies should contend for division crowns.

OCT. 20
WMU AT CMU
Western has dominated this series of late, with five wins in the last seven games — but the Chips won last year in Kalamazoo.

OCT. 25
TOLEDO AT WMU
The Broncos beat Toledo in the final two seasons of the P.J. Fleck era but lost by 27 points last season. Are they trending in the wrong direction?

NOV. 7
TOLEDO AT NIU
Fun fact: These two MAC West powers have not faced each other on a Saturday since 2009. NIU has won six of the eight midweek MACtion tilts.

NOV. 14
BUFFALO AT OHIO
Buffalo closed its 2017 season with a surprising 31–24 win over Ohio at home. The Bulls are hopeful this one will impact the MAC East race.

NOV. 20
NIU AT WMU
Western holds a 23–19 advantage in the series but has lost eight of the last nine, including a 35–31 decision in DeKalb last November.



ANTHONY JOHNSON, BUFFALO

MAC Returning Leaders

Passing	ATT	COMP	PCT	YDS	TD	INT	AVG/G
Tyree Jackson, Buffalo	237	143	60.3	2,096	12	3	232.9
Gus Ragland, Miami	269	150	55.8	2,032	19	7	225.8
Nathan Rourke, Ohio	292	161	55.1	2,203	17	7	169.5

Rushing	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Caleb Huntley, Ball State	210	1,003	4.8	3	52	83.6
Jonathan Ward, Central Michigan	179	1,017	5.7	10	79	78.2
A.J. Ouellette, Ohio	192	1,006	5.2	7	63	77.4

Receiving	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Anthony Johnson, Buffalo	76	1,356	17.8	14	69	113.0
Diontae Johnson, Toledo	74	1,278	17.3	13	89	91.3
Justin Hall, Ball State	78	801	10.3	3	47	66.8

Tackles: Khalil Hodge, Buffalo (154); Ulysees Gilbert, Akron (140)
Sacks: Sutton Smith, Northern Illinois (14); Maxx Crosby, Eastern Michigan (11)
Interceptions: Three players tied with 5

2017 MAC Standings

EAST	MAC	OVERALL	WEST	MAC	OVERALL
Akron	6-2	7-7	Toledo	7-1	11-3
Ohio	5-3	9-4	Central Michigan	6-2	8-5
Miami (OH)	4-4	5-7	Northern Illinois	6-2	8-5
Buffalo	4-4	6-6	Western Michigan	4-4	6-6
Bowling Green	2-6	2-10	Eastern Michigan	3-5	5-7
Kent State	1-7	2-10	Ball State	0-8	2-10

2017 Bowl Results

Boca Raton Bowl: FAU 50, Akron 3

Bahamas Bowl: Ohio 41, UAB 6

Famous Idaho Potato Bowl: Wyoming 37, Central Michigan 14

Dollar General Bowl: Appalachian State 34, Toledo 0

Quick Lane Bowl: Duke 36, Northern Illinois 14

2017 MAC TEAM STATS & RANKINGS

OFFENSE

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
AKRON	22.1 (10)	105.4 (12)	210.6 (7)	316.0 (11)
BALL STATE	17.9 (11)	158.0 (5)	177.2 (10)	335.2 (10)
BOWLING GREEN	25.3 (8)	151.7 (7)	235.0 (6)	386.7 (7)
BUFFALO	28.5 (T5)	141.1 (9)	290.8 (1)	431.9 (3)
CENTRAL MICHIGAN	28.5 (T5)	134.1 (11)	255.7 (4)	389.8 (4)
EASTERN MICHIGAN	26.1 (7)	129.6 (11)	257.3 (3)	386.9 (6)
KENT STATE	12.8 (12)	152.5 (6)	122.7 (12)	275.2 (12)
MIAMI (OHIO)	24.4 (9)	146.9 (8)	237.7 (5)	384.6 (8)
NORTHERN ILLINOIS	28.9 (4)	177.9 (4)	199.9 (8)	377.8 (9)
OHIO	39.1 (1)	244.5 (1)	188.5 (9)	433.1 (2)
TOLEDO	36.4 (2)	204.0 (3)	279.9 (2)	483.9 (1)
WESTERN MICHIGAN	33.9 (3)	224.8 (2)	164.8 (11)	389.6 (5)

DEFENSE

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
AKRON	28.0 (8)	205.4 (10)	237.4 (10)	442.9 (11)
BALL STATE	40.7 (12)	188.0 (8)	233.6 (9)	421.6 (10)
BOWLING GREEN	38.0 (11)	253.3 (12)	253.3 (11)	506.6 (12)
BUFFALO	24.8 (5)	194.8 (9)	203.3 (5)	398.2 (8)
CENTRAL MICHIGAN	27.5 (7)	185.2 (7)	185.5 (1)	370.8 (4)
EASTERN MICHIGAN	23.3 (2)	173.3 (5)	190.3 (2)	363.6 (2)
KENT STATE	35.1 (10)	213.3 (11)	195.1 (3)	408.3 (9)
MIAMI (OHIO)	24.1 (3)	166.8 (4)	200.8 (4)	367.6 (3)
NORTHERN ILLINOIS	22.0 (1)	120.0 (2)	218.5 (7)	338.5 (1)
OHIO	24.2 (4)	110.5 (1)	261.2 (12)	371.6 (5)
TOLEDO	26.2 (6)	177.9 (6)	207.1 (6)	385.0 (7)
WESTERN MICHIGAN	29.0 (9)	156.1 (3)	222.4 (8)	378.5 (6)

ALL-MAC TEAM

First-Team Offense

QB	**Nathan Rourke**	6-2	209	Jr.	Ohio
RB	**James Gilbert**	5-8	200	Jr.	Ball State
RB	**A.J. Ouellette**	5-9	205	Sr.	Ohio
AP	**Jonathan Ward**	6-0	194	Jr.	Central Michigan
WR	**Anthony Johnson**	6-2	207	Sr.	Buffalo
WR	**Diontae Johnson**	5-11	181	Jr.	Toledo
TE	**Tyler Mabry**	6-3	250	Jr.	Buffalo
C	**John Keenoy**	6-3	300	Sr.	Western Michigan
OL	**Joe Anderson**	6-6	340	Sr.	Ohio
OL	**Jimmy Leatiota**	6-3	295	Sr.	Eastern Michigan
OL	**Joe Lowery**	6-7	305	Sr.	Ohio
OL	**Max Scharping**	6-6	320	Sr.	Northern Illinois



JONATHAN WARD, CENTRAL MICHIGAN


SAM BEAL, WESTERN MICHIGAN

First-Team Defense

DL	**Jamal Davis**	6-4	235	Sr.	Akron
DL	**Maxx Crosby**	6-5	265	Jr.	Eastern Michigan
DL	**Jeremiah Harris**	6-5	255	Sr.	Eastern Michigan
DL	**Sutton Smith**	6-0	225	Jr.	Northern Illinois
LB	**Ulysees Gilbert**	6-1	225	Sr.	Akron
LB	**Khalil Hodge**	6-1	235	Sr.	Buffalo
LB	**Jim Jones**	6-1	232	Sr.	Kent State
CB	**Sam Beal**	6-1	189	Sr.	Western Michigan
CB	**Sean Bunting**	6-1	180	Jr.	Central Michigan
S	**Javon Hagan**	6-0	207	Jr.	Ohio
S	**Brody Hoying**	5-11	205	Jr.	Eastern Michigan

First-Team Specialists

K	**Jameson Vest**	5-10	190	Sr.	Toledo
P	**Derek Adams**	6-0	192	Jr.	Kent State
KR	**Malik Dunner**	5-11	200	Jr.	Ball State
PR	**Danzel McKinley-Lewis**	5-10	183	Jr.	Toledo

SECOND-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Gus Ragland**	6-1	215	Sr.	Miami
RB	**Jamauri Bogan**	5-7	188	Sr.	Western Michigan
RB	**Shakif Seymour**	5-11	218	So.	Toledo
AP	**Andrew Clair**	5-10	192	So.	Bowling Green
WR	**James Gardner**	6-4	216	Sr.	Miami
WR	**Cody Thompson**	6-2	205	Sr.	Toledo
TE	**Logan Hessbrook**	6-3	239	Sr.	Central Michigan
C	**James O'Hagan**	6-3	305	Sr.	Buffalo
OL	**Luke Juriga**	6-4	295	Jr.	Western Michigan
OL	**Sam McCollum**	6-3	300	Sr.	Miami
OL	**Jordan Rigg**	6-4	294	Sr.	Miami
OL	**Jordan Steckler**	6-5	313	Jr.	Northern Illinois

SECOND-TEAM DEFENSE

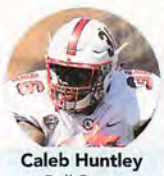
DL	**Nathan Brisson-Fast**	6-5	260	Sr.	Central Michigan
DL	**Doug Costin**	6-2	285	Jr.	Miami
DL	**Mike Danna**	6-2	250	Jr.	Central Michigan
DL	**Chuck Harris**	6-4	265	Sr.	Buffalo
LB	**Evan Croutch**	6-0	227	Sr.	Ohio
LB	**Malik Fountain**	6-2	240	Sr.	Central Michigan
LB	**Brad Koening**	6-1	225	Sr.	Miami
CB	**Kyron Brown**	6-1	190	Sr.	Akron
CB	**Jalen Fox**	5-11	186	Sr.	Ohio
S	**Vince Calhoun**	5-11	185	Jr.	Eastern Michigan
S	**Alvin Davis**	5-9	170	Jr.	Akron

SECOND-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Louie Zervos**	5-9	174	Jr.	Ohio
P	**Nick Gasser**	6-0	175	Sr.	Akron
KR	**Diontae Johnson**	5-11	181	Jr.	Toledo
PR	**Papi White**	5-9	168	Sr.	Ohio


Gus Ragland
Miami


Jalen Fox
Ohio


Caleb Huntley
Ball State


Jerrod Davis
Central Michigan

THIRD-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Tyree Jackson**	6-7	245	Jr.	Buffalo
RB	**Caleb Huntley**	5-10	225	So.	Ball State
RB	**Kenny Young**	5-7	179	Sr.	Miami
AP	**Justin Hall**	5-9	160	So.	Ball State
WR	**Scott Miller**	5-10	160	Sr.	Bowling Green
WR	**Papi White**	5-9	168	Sr.	Ohio
TE	**Nolan Givan**	6-2	245	So.	Ball State
C	**Luke Shively**	6-3	286	Sr.	Northern Illinois
OL	**Bryce Harris**	6-3	285	Jr.	Toledo
OL	**Hagen Meservy**	6-3	293	So.	Ohio
OL	**Kyle Ritz**	6-5	305	Sr.	Akron
OL	**Lorenzo Taborn**	6-5	345	Jr.	Bowling Green

THIRD-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Nate Childress**	6-3	292	Jr.	Toledo
DL	**Will Evans**	6-2	243	So.	Ohio
DL	**David Konowalski**	6-3	233	Sr.	Bowling Green
DL	**Nate Trawick**	5-11	335	Sr.	Miami
LB	**Alex Briones**	6-2	240	Sr.	Central Michigan
LB	**Brandon Harris**	6-4	220	Sr.	Bowling Green
LB	**Junior McMullen**	6-1	245	Sr.	Miami
CB	**Cameron Lewis**	5-11	185	Sr.	Buffalo
CB	**Jamal Parker**	5-8	183	Jr.	Kent State
S	**Kahlil Robinson**	6-0	175	Jr.	Toledo
S	**Mykelti Williams**	5-11	205	Jr.	Northern Illinois

THIRD-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Sam Sloman**	5-8	208	Jr.	Miami
P	**Michael Farkas**	6-4	195	Jr.	Ohio
KR	**Jerrod Davis**	5-11	197	Jr.	Central Michigan
PR	**Corey Lacanaria**	5-8	170	Sr.	Ball State

Beal, Davis, Huntley, Fox, Ragland: AP; Johnson: Paul Hokanson/UBBulls.com;

Akron **Zips**

National Forecast: **94** • MAC East Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **5-7, 4-4 MAC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at Nebraska
Sept.	8	Morgan State
Sept.	15	at Northwestern
Sept.	22	at Iowa State
Oct.	6	Miami (Ohio)
Oct.	13	at Buffalo
Oct.	20	at Kent State
Oct.	27	Central Michigan
Nov.	1	Northern Illinois
Nov.	10	at Eastern Michigan
Nov.	17	Bowling Green
Nov.	23	at Ohio

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-7, 6-2 MAC

Sept.	2	at Penn State	L	0-52
Sept.	9	Arkansas-Pine Bluff	W	52-3
Sept.	16	Iowa State	L	14-41
Sept.	23	at Troy	L	17-22
Sept.	30	at Bowling Green	W	34-23
Oct.	7	Ball State	W	31-3
Oct.	15	at Western Michigan	W	14-13
Oct.	21	at Toledo	L	21-48
Oct.	28	Buffalo	W	21-20
Nov.	7	at Miami (Ohio)	L	14-24
Nov.	14	Ohio	W	37-34
Nov.	21	Kent State	W	24-14
Dec.	2	vs. Toledo #	L	28-45
Dec.	19	vs. Florida Atlantic %	L	3-50

#Detroit %Boca Raton Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Keyondre White, RB, Fort Lauderdale, FL
2. Abraham Alce, RB, Immokalee, FL
3. Devin Jordan, OT, Fort Lauderdale, FL
4. Jalen Hooks, WR, Warren, OH
5. Richard Kelly, OG, Akron, OH
6. Rich Hall, CB, Pompano Beach, FL
7. Landon Forman, OT, Miami, OK*
8. Treon Sibley, WR, Akron, OH
9. Ben Phillis, OT, Washington, PA
10. Devanier Floyd, RB, Akron, OH

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	22.1 ppg	10	108
Rushing	105.4 ypg	12	124
Passing	210.6 ypg	7	81
Total	316.0 ypg	11	122
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	28.0 ppg	8	73
Rushing	205.4 ypg	10	106
Passing	237.4 ypg	10	84
Total	442.9 ypg	11	104
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
+10	+0.71	1	19

STAT CORNER

+10

Akron's turnover margin flipped from minus-8 in 2016 to plus-10 in 2017 — minus-1 in seven losses and plus-11 in seven wins.

OFFENSE You could argue that Kato Nelson saved the Zips' 2017 championship season. After star senior quarterback Thomas Woodson was suspended, Nelson led the Zips to a 37–34 upset victory over Ohio that paved the way to a MAC East Division title. The dual-threat QB threw for 322 yards and four touchdowns against Ohio and finished with eight TD tosses and just one interception in his five starts while also gaining 109 yards on the ground during that season-ending stretch. All that would lead one to believe that Nelson enters his sophomore season entrenched as the starter, but he's actually being pushed by redshirt freshman Alex Ramart.

Akron has a proven running back returning in 5'9", 210-pound senior Van Edwards and a promising virtual newcomer in Deltron Sands. The 5'8", 200-pound junior transfer from Oregon State was injured for much of last year but could play a significant role in 2018 as the team looks to spark a ground attack that averaged just 3.2 yards per rush last fall.

Akron's receiving corps will be bolstered by the return of Mykel Traylor-Bennett, a 6'3", 230-pound sixth-year senior who missed all of 2017 with a knee injury. Traylor-Bennett has been very effective when healthy since his freshman season in 2013.

The Zips suffered some losses up front, but Kyle Ritz is a fourth-year starter to build around at right guard.

DEFENSE The Zips fielded a formidable defense last season that managed to slow down every MAC foe besides champion Toledo. This year, they believe their defense can be as good as any in the conference.

A unit featuring experience at every position is headlined by senior linebacker Ulysees Gilbert, a reigning first-team All-MAC performer who led the squad with 140 tackles and five sacks while also piling up 9.5 tackles for a loss and three interceptions in 2017.

Senior Kyron Brown broke up 11 passes last fall and is widely regarded as one of the top cover corners in the league, while senior Shawn Featherstone is an impact player at safety. Junior cornerback Alvin Davis, a second-team All-MAC pick in 2017, missed spring drills due to injury but should be ready for the season.

Up front, watch out for junior Davon'te Jest, a 300-pound nose tackle who is primed to make an impact after missing last season. Senior end Jamal Davis, a third-team All-MAC selection last year, and senior tackle Brock Boxen are also among 15 returning defensive players who have started games for the Zips.

DeMarcus Lloyd, a senior linebacker who missed last season due to injury, has impressed coaches.

SPECIALISTS Special teams could be a strength, with senior Nick Gasser back to handle both the punting and kicking chores. He averaged 42.2 yards per punt but made only 3-of-6 field goal attempts.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Zips probably made prime time a year before they were truly ready in 2017. They won a weak MAC East Division but were hammered by Toledo in the MAC Championship Game and by Florida Atlantic in the Boca Raton Bowl. This year, Akron seems to have some pieces in place, but the Zips could have a tough time getting back to the league title game as the top teams in the East should be vastly improved. Ohio looks to be the class of the division, and both Miami and Buffalo will be in the hunt. The Zips could finish anywhere from first to fourth in what figures to be an intriguing season of MACtion.



ULYSEES GILBERT

"They're young and talented, but this will be a tough year. They were a mess on offense last season — not really sure what their long-term plan is there."

— An opposing MAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (4)

WR	15	Nate Stewart (So.)	14	Dustin Burkhart (So.)
WR	19	Andre Williams (So.)	8	M.J. McGriff (So.)
WR	2	Mykel Traylor-Bennett (Sr.)	**3**	**Kwadarrius Smith (Sr.)**
LT	**59**	**Trevor Brown (Jr.)**	76	Rich Kallay (Jr.)
LG	**56**	**Brandon Council (So.)**	57	Jonathan Neeley (So.)
C	78	Austin Sample (So.)	53	Bryce Petersen (So.)
RG	**66**	**Kyle Ritz (Sr.)**	72	Hunter Corne (Fr.)
RT	50	Undrea Bullard (Sr.)	63	Nick Fazio (Sr.)
TE	36	Kobie Booker (So.)	35	Newman Williams (Sr.)
QB	1	Kato Nelson (So.)	12	Alex Ramart (Fr.)
RB	7	Van Edwards (Sr.)	4	Deltron Sands (Jr.)

DEFENSE (9)

DE	**9**	**Jamal Davis (Sr.)**	8	Josh Ward (Jr.)
DT	**50**	**Brock Boxen (Sr.)**	12	DeAndre Brimage (So.)
NT	97	Brennan Williams (Sr.)	11	Davon'te Jest (Jr.)
DE	**94**	**Brian Reinke (Sr.)**	16	Justin Sampson (So.)
SLB	**5**	**Ulysees Gilbert (Sr.)**	**10**	**Brian Bell (Sr.)**
MLB	40	John Lako (Jr.)	27	Bubba Arslanian (Fr).
WLB	34	DeMarcus Lloyd (Sr.)	32	James King (Jr.)
CB	**24**	**Darian Dailey (Sr.)**	13	Denzel Butler (Jr.)
CB	**1**	**Alvin Davis (Jr.)**	**4**	**Kyron Brown (Sr.)**
S	2	Shawn Featherstone (Sr.)	26	Rich Hall (Fr.)
S	**7**	**Jordan George (Sr.)**	31	Jamal Baggett (Sr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	48	Nick Gasser (Sr.)	**KR**	7	Van Edwards (Sr.)
P	48	Nick Gasser (Sr.)	**PR**	19	Andre Williams (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Kato Nelson, 140-70-989-2, 8 TDs
Rushing: Van Edwards, 94 att., 343 yds., 2 TDs
Receiving: Kwadarrius Smith, 34 rec., 726 yds., 7 TDs
Tackles: Ulysees Gilbert, 140
Sacks: Ulysees Gilbert, 5.0
Interceptions: Jordan George, 5

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Terry Bowden
Record at School: 31-44 (6 years)
Career Record: 171-106-2 (24 years)
Offensive Coordinator: A.J. Milwee
Defensive Coordinator: TBD
Akron, OH • InfoCision Stadium (30,000)

Jeff Harwell/University of Akron

Bowling Green Falcons

National Forecast: **119** • MAC East Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **3-9, 2-6 MAC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at Oregon
Sept.	8	Maryland
Sept.	15	Eastern Kentucky
Sept.	22	Miami (Ohio)
Sept.	29	at Georgia Tech
Oct.	6	at Toledo
Oct.	13	Western Michigan
Oct.	20	at Ohio
Oct.	30	Kent State
Nov.	10	at Central Michigan
Nov.	17	at Akron
Nov.	23	Buffalo

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 2-10, 2-6 MAC

Sept.	2	at Michigan State	L	10-35
Sept.	9	South Dakota	L	27-35
Sept.	16	at Northwestern	L	7-49
Sept.	23	at Middle Tennessee	L	13-24
Sept.	30	Akron	L	23-34
Oct.	7	at Miami (Ohio)	W	37-29
Oct.	14	Ohio	L	30-48
Oct.	21	Northern Illinois	L	17-48
Oct.	31	at Kent State	W	44-16
Nov.	7	at Buffalo	L	28-38
Nov.	15	Toledo	L	37-66
Nov.	21	at Eastern Michigan	L	31-34

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Cameron Stage, OG, Fort Lauderdale, FL
2. Deandre Fitz-Henley, ILB, Clearwater, FL
3. Rico Frye, RB, Cartersville, GA
4. Karl Brooks, OLB, Lansing, MI
5. Antwuan Johnson, ILB, Dayton, OH
6. Devin Ruffin Jr., ILB, Saint Louis, MO
7. Ra'veion Hargrove, RB, Trotwood, OH
8. James Harris Jr., CB, Pompano Beach, FL
9. Bryce Veasley, QB, Southfield, MI
10. Jevon Henderson, DT, Centerville, OH

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	25.3 ppg	8	90
Rushing	151.7 ypg	7	82
Passing	235.0 ypg	6	62
Total	386.7 ypg	7	84
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	38.0 ppg	11	123
Rushing	253.3 ypg	12	127
Passing	253.3 ypg	11	105
Total	506.6 ypg	12	126
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
-1	-0.08	6	72

STAT CORNER

25.1

After averaging 42.2 points per game in 2015, Bowling Green has averaged just 25.1 per game in two years since Dino Babers' departure.

OFFENSE Bowling Green struggled during a brutal two-win 2017 season, and if the program's fortunes are to change, there will need to be more production and efficiency from the offense. The Falcons turned the ball over 25 times in 2017 and saw the opposition convert those miscues into 100 points.

The coaches are expecting big things from sophomore quarterback Jarret Doege, who started five times as a freshman and completed 63.8 percent of his passes for 12 touchdowns with just three interceptions.

Sophomore Andrew Clair will take over as the featured tailback after averaging 6.8 yards per carry as a freshman while sharing the job with then-senior Josh Cleveland. Junior Matt Domer comes back from an injury-shortened 2017 to complement Clair. After playing defense throughout his career, senior Dorian Hendrix has moved over to play fullback, filling a void there.

The receivers are the deepest and most experienced group, with five of the top six from 2017 returning. Two-time All-MAC performer Scott Miller had 63 catches for 722 yards a year ago and leads the group.

The line lost depth and experience to graduation but returns senior tackle Austin Labus, who started 12 games a year ago and anchors the group. Juniors Jack Kramer and Lorenzo Taborn and sophomore Caleb Bright all have more than a handful of starts to their credit and should help provide the foundation up front.

DEFENSE The call went out for a dramatic overhaul after the Falcons allowed an alarming 506.6 yards per game last season. Bowling Green has hired Carl Pelini to run the unit and brought in several new position coaches. With five of the top six tacklers returning, the opportunity for significant improvement is there.

Senior end David Konowalski leads the group up front after starting 12 games last season and posting a team-high 8.5 tackles for a loss and 3.5 sacks. The linebackers are an athletic lot, led by senior Brandon Harris, with 92 tackles and three fumble recoveries in 2017. Sophomores Armani Posey and Kholbe Coleman as well as junior college transfer Brandon Perce give the unit plenty of punch.

The defensive backfield returns every starter from last season, led by corner Montre Gregory, safety Marcus Milton and rover Fred Garth — all seniors. The secondary also welcomes back junior Jamari Bozeman, a third-team All-MAC pick at safety in 2016 who was sidelined last season with injuries.

SPECIALISTS The Falcons lost NFL-bound punter Joe Davidson, whose net average of 42.3 yards was in the top five nationally, and are now looking to junior college transfer Cooper Lee to take over. The placekicker is new, too — sophomore Nate Needham.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Falcons and coach Mike Jinks are desperate to see their fortunes trend upward after a clumsy couple of seasons. BG's recruiting classes have been ranked in the top three in the MAC the past two years, and the addition of Pelini addresses the most urgent need. Pelini has some decent building blocks with Bowling Green's veteran secondary and athletic linebackers. Doege has the confidence of his coaches and teammates after making five starts as a freshman, while Miller leads a group of receivers who should make an impact.

The first month of the season will be rough, with Oregon, Maryland and Georgia Tech all on the schedule, so a break-even year will require a strong conference showing.



ANDREW CLAIR

"This could be the season they make a big jump. They're starting to show that heavy Texas influence (from their coaching staff) on offense."

— An opposing MAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	**14**	**Janarvis Pough (Jr.)**	3	Datrin Guyton (Sr.)	
WR	89	Deric Phouthavong (Sr.)	80	Quintin Morris (So.)	
WR	**21**	**Scott Miller (Sr.)**	5	Calvin Clater (Fr.)	
LT	77	John Kurtz (Sr.)	75	Matt Tanner (Jr.)	
LG	**74**	**Lorenzo Taborn (Jr.)**	69	Tim Blair (So)	
C	55	Caleb Bright (So.)	62	Sam Neverov (Fr.)	
RG	**65**	**Jack Kramer (Jr.)**	73	Joe Ware (So.)	
RT	**64**	**Austin Labus (Sr.)**	72	Derek Downs (Fr.)	
QB	2	Jarret Doege (So.)	13	Grant Loy (So.)	
RB	1	Andrew Clair (So.)	23	Matt Domer (Jr.)	
FB	47	Dorian Hendrix (Sr.)	10	Presley Motes (Jr.)	

DEFENSE (7)

DE	**8**	**David Konowalski (Sr.)**	44	Dirion Hutchins (So.)
DT	97	Josh Croslen (So.)	54	Nico Lautanen (Jr.)
DT	95	Kyle Junior (Jr.)	92	Caylon May (Fr.)
DE	**58**	**Brian Sanders (Sr.)**	50	Jonah Harper (Sr.)
OLB	7	Armani Posey (So.)	9	Roland Walder (So.)
MLB	55	Kholbe Coleman (So.)	15	Brandon Perce (Jr.)
OLB	**1**	**Brandon Harris (Sr.)**	36	Jack Walz (Sr.)
CB	**18**	**Cameron Jefferies (Jr.)**	2	Clint Stephens (Sr.)
CB	**6**	**Montre Gregory (Sr.)**	22	Robert Jackson (Sr.)
FS	**14**	**Marcus Milton (Sr.)**	13	Jamari Bozeman (Jr.)
ROV	**4**	**Fred Garth (Sr.)**	19	Ben Hale (Sr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	12	Nate Needham (So.)	**KR**	1	Andrew Clair (So.)
P	81	Cooper Lee (Jr.)	**PR**	14	Marcus Milton (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Jarret Doege, 188-120-1,381-3, 12 TDs
Rushing: Andrew Clair, 107 att., 725 yds., 4 TDs
Receiving: Scott Miller, 63 rec., 722 yds, 4 TDs
Tackles: Fred Garth, 95
Sacks: Kyle Junior, 3.5; David Konowalski, 3.5
Interceptions: Marcus Milton, Clint Stephens, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mike Jinks
Record at School: 6-18 (2 years)
Career Record: 6-18 (2 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Kevin Kilmer, Andy Padron
Defensive Coordinator: Carl Pelini
Bowling Green, OH • Doyt Perry Stadium (24,000)

BGSU Marketing & Communications

Buffalo **Bulls**

National Forecast: **89** • MAC East Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **7-5, 5-3 MAC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Delaware State
Sept.	8	at Temple
Sept.	15	Eastern Michigan
Sept.	22	at Rutgers
Sept.	29	Army
Oct.	6	at Central Michigan
Oct.	13	Akron
Oct.	20	at Toledo
Oct.	30	Miami (Ohio)
Nov.	6	Kent State
Nov.	14	at Ohio
Nov.	23	at Bowling Green

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 6-6, 4-4 MAC

Aug.	31	at Minnesota	L	7-17
Sept.	9	at Army	L	17-21
Sept.	16	Colgate	W	33-10
Sept.	23	Florida Atlantic	W	34-31
Sept.	30	at Kent State	W	27-13
Oct.	7	Western Michigan (ot)	L	68-71
Oct.	14	Northern Illinois	L	13-14
Oct.	21	at Miami (Ohio)	L	14-24
Oct.	28	at Akron	L	20-21
Nov.	7	Bowling Green	W	38-28
Nov.	16	at Ball State	W	40-24
Nov.	24	Ohio	W	31-24

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Eddie Wilson, DT, Jersey City, NJ
2. Dylan McDuffie, RB, Amherst, NY
3. Cory Gross Jr., DB, Brockport, NY
4. LeMaro Smith Jr., WR, Cleveland, OH
5. Dan Fedor, OT, Elmira, NY
6. Matt Myers, QB, West Seneca, NY
7. Max Michel, ILB, Elizabeth, NJ
8. Atunaisa Vainikolo, DT, Kihei, HI*
9. Mike Novitsky, OL, Victor, NY
10. Joey Banks, S, Sacramento, CA*

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	28.5 ppg	5	63
Rushing	141.1 ypg	9	93
Passing	290.8 ypg	1	22
Total	431.9 ypg	3	36
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	24.8 ppg	5	48
Rushing	194.8 ypg	9	97
Passing	203.3 ypg	5	38
Total	398.2 ypg	8	71
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
+1	+0.08	3	59

STAT CORNER

14.4

Buffalo stuffed opponents at or behind the line on 14.4% of rushes, eighth worst in FBS. A little disruption would go a long way.

OFFENSE Raised expectations at Buffalo begin with towering quarterback Tyree Jackson, the 6'7", 245-pound dual threat who produced 2,293 yards of total offense and 16 touchdowns with only three interceptions in eight games as a sophomore. When a knee injury forced Jackson out, backup Drew Anderson compiled 1,131 yards and 11 touchdowns with just one turnover before sustaining a shoulder injury. Along with third-stringer Kyle Vantrease, who started one game as a true freshman, the Bulls' quarterbacks combined to lead the MAC in passing offense (290.8 ypg).

Buffalo boasts the top returning receiver in the nation in Anthony Johnson. The 6'2", 207-pound junior college transfer caught 76 passes for 1,356 yards and a school-record 14 touchdowns last season. He ranked second in the country in receiving yards per game (113.0). Returning starters K.J. Osborn and tight end Tyler Mabry are also athletic targets. Antonio Nunn emerged as deep threat as a freshman.

Running back Johnathan Hawkins entered last season atop the depth chart but played in only three games before getting shut down with a shoulder injury. Emmanuel Reed averaged 94.3 yards from scrimmage and a touchdown over the final 10 games. Hawkins is the bigger back (5'11", 208), but the 5'8" Reed can be tough to tackle. Jackson was the Bulls' second-leading rusher through four games but stopped scrambling after he returned from injury and will continue to be judicious about leaving the pocket.

Three starters return from an offensive line than allowed only 17 sacks, including third-team all-conference center James O'Hagan and left tackle Evin Ksiezarczyk.

DEFENSE The Bulls bring back the bulk of a unit that improved from 95th to 48th in scoring defense. Excluding a seven-overtime shootout with Western Michigan, they allowed 20.5 points in the other 11 games.

All-MAC middle linebacker Kahlil Hodge returns after finishing second in the country with 154 tackles. Senior Chuck Harris is an anchor at defensive end, but Buffalo must replace top pass rusher Demone Harris. Junior college transfer Atunaisa Vainikolo should slot next to 305-pound senior Justin Brandon in the middle of the D-line. UAB transfer Jordan Collier flourished at outside linebacker after converting from safety, but the weak-side position is a big question mark.

Senior cornerbacks Cameron Lewis, Brandon Williams and Tatum Slack all started at least six games last season. Lewis battled injuries but is the best of the group when healthy. Both starting safeties graduated. Junior college transfer Joey Banks is expected to fill one of the spots. The Bulls' eight interceptions last year ranked second to last in the MAC.

SPECIALISTS Placekicker Adam Mitcheson missed a MAC-high nine field goals last year, including a couple of potential game-winners. Osborn is capable but unspectacular as a returner.

FINAL ANALYSIS Buffalo was one of three 6–6 teams that didn't receive a postseason invitation. Their six losses came by a combined 29 points, and the largest was a 10-point defeat at Minnesota in the opener. Coach Lance Leipold won five Division III national championships at Wisconsin-Whitewater but has not reached the postseason in three years at Buffalo. With so much firepower returning, anything less than a trip to a bowl game will be a major disappointment.



Anthony Johnson

"Probably a breakout team last season if they keep the quarterback healthy. They have a legit receiver in the (Anthony) Johnson kid. He could play anywhere."

— An opposing MAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)

WR	83	**Anthony Johnson (Sr.)**		Rodney Scott III (Fr.)
WR	8	**K.J. Osborn (Jr.)**	17	Charlie Jones (Fr.)
WR	16	Antonio Nunn (So.)	4	Isaiah King (Fr.)
LT	67	**Evin Ksiezarczyk (Jr.)**	78	D.J. Jones (Fr.)
LG	75	Skylar Hartley (Sr.)	72	Paul Nosworthy (Jr.)
C	77	**James O'Hagan (Sr.)**	64	Michael Kenefick (Jr.)
RG	65	**Tomas Jack-Kurdyla (Jr.)**	59	Jake Fuzak (So.)
RT	76	Jacquis Webb (Sr.)	73	Kayode Awosika (So.)
TE	81	**Tyler Mabry (Jr.)**	85	Julien Bourassa (Fr.)
QB	3	**Tyree Jackson (Jr.)**	12	Drew Anderson (Sr.)
RB	24	Johnathan Hawkins (Sr.)	29	**Emmanuel Reed (Jr.)**

DEFENSE (6)

DE	50	Malcolm Koonce (So.)	94	Myles Nicholas (Sr.)
DT	97	Atunaisa Vainikolo (Jr.)	93	Chibueze Onwuka (So.)
DT	90	**Justin Brandon (Sr.)**	95	Jake Khoury (Sr.)
DE	92	**Chuck Harris (Sr.)**	55	Kennedy Emesibe (Sr.)
OLB	31	Kadofi Wright (So.)	20	James Patterson (Fr.)
MLB	4	**Khalil Hodge (Sr.)**	42	Matt Otwinowski (Jr.)
OLB	25	**Jordan Collier (Sr.)**	34	Ja'Varius Harrison (So.)
CB	39	Cameron Lewis (Sr.)	9	**Tatum Slack (Sr.)**
CB	14	**Brandon Williams (Sr.)**	12	Devon Russell (Sr.)
S	22	Joey Banks (Jr.)	2	Kobe Green (So.)
S	28	Dev Lamour (Jr.)	6	Jeremiah Dadeboe (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	19	Adam Mitcheson (Sr.)	KR	8	K.J. Osborn (Jr.)
P	40	Evan Finegan (Fr.)	PR	8	K.J. Osborn (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Tyree Jackson, 237-143-2,096-3, 12 TDs
Rushing: Emmanuel Reed, 199 att., 840 yds., 9 TDs
Receiving: Anthony Johnson, 76 rec., 1,356 yds., 14 TDs
Tackles: Khalil Hodge, 154
Sacks: Chuck Harris, 4.0
Interceptions: Khalil Hodge, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Lance Leipold
Record at School: 13-23 (3 years)
Career Record: 122-29 (11 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Andy Kotelnicki, Jim Zebrowski
Defensive Coordinator: Brian Borland
Buffalo, NY • UB Stadium (29,013)

Paul Hokanson/UBBulls.com

Kent State Golden Flashes

National Forecast: **129** • MAC East Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **1-11, 0-8 MAC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at Illinois
Sept.	8	Howard
Sept.	15	at Penn State
Sept.	22	at Ole Miss
Sept.	29	at Ball State
Oct.	6	Ohio
Oct.	13	at Miami (Ohio)
Oct.	20	Akron
Oct.	30	at Bowling Green
Nov.	6	at Buffalo
Nov.	15	Toledo
Nov.	23	Eastern Michigan

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 2-10, 1-7 MAC

Sept.	2	at Clemson	L	3-56
Sept.	9	Howard	W	38-31
Sept.	16	at Marshall	L	0-21
Sept.	23	at Louisville	L	3-42
Sept.	30	Buffalo	L	13-27
Oct.	7	at Northern Illinois	L	3-24
Oct.	14	Miami (Ohio)	W	17-14
Oct.	21	at Ohio	L	3-48
Oct.	31	Bowling Green	L	16-44
Nov.	8	at Western Michigan	L	20-48
Nov.	14	Central Michigan	L	23-42
Nov.	21	at Akron	L	14-24

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Woody Barrett, QB, Orlando, FL*
2. Montre Miller, CB, Blythewood, SC
3. Connor Parks, DE, Orlando, FL
4. Matt Harmon, OLB, Rockwood, MI
5. KeKe McFadden, WR, Pahokee, FL
6. Isaiah McKoy, WR, Norcross, GA
7. Marquez Glover, QB, Ocala, FL
8. Julian Sams, OG, Bealeton, VA
9. Jeremiah Salaam, S, Frostproof, FL
10. Daniel Johnson, TE, London, ON

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	12.8 ppg	12	129
Rushing	152.5 ypg	6	81
Passing	122.7 ypg	12	124
Total	275.2 ypg	12	128
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	35.1 ppg	10	112
Rushing	213.3 ypg	11	114
Passing	195.1 ypg	3	27
Total	408.3 ypg	9	77
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
-7	-0.58	11	106

STAT CORNER

-1.8

Kent State averaged just 4.4 yards per play (129th in FBS) and allowed 6.2. That minus-1.8 yard margin ranked 126th overall.

OFFENSE Head coach Sean Lewis takes over a Golden Flashes offense that averaged 62.8 plays per game last season, which ranked 116th in the nation. With Lewis directing Syracuse as co-offensive coordinator/quarterbacks coach, the Orange averaged a nation-leading 85.6 plays per contest in 2017. Lewis is implementing that same up-tempo philosophy at Kent State. But he still has to find players who can execute it.

Lewis' offense places a huge burden on its signal caller to snap the football in less than 15 seconds between plays. He brought in a highly touted transfer in Woody Barrett, a 6'2", 231-pound sophomore who was once in the mix to start at Auburn. Barrett, a freakish athlete with a big — yet erratic — arm, is competing with sophomore dual threat Dustin Crum, who saw action in 10 games last season. Redshirt freshman Will Phillis is also in the mix.

One player who promises to see a major role in the offense is junior running back Justin Rankin, a solid all-around performer who led the team in rushing (490 yards) and receiving (42 catches) last season. Kent State brings back its top four receivers but needs to develop a consistent threat at the position. Junior Trey Harrell seems most likely to emerge in 2018.

Only two key contributors return on an offensive line that's been shaky for the past five seasons.

DEFENSE Kent State will also look to ramp things up on defense this season after giving up 35.1 points and 408.3 yards per game in 2017, and it has more proven performers to pull it off on this side of the ball.

A solid linebacking corps is anchored by senior Jim Jones, who earned first-team All-MAC honors last season after leading the team in tackles (98) and sacks (six). Senior Matt Bahr was also poised for a big year last fall before suffering a season-ending knee injury in the second game of the season, but he was healthy and making plays all over the field during spring drills.

Elvis Hines had a solid freshman season and is expected to develop into one of the better corners in the conference, and junior cornerback Jamal Parker broke up 11 passes in 2017.

Kent State will be relatively young in the trenches but should receive a boost from the return of senior tackle Kalil Morris from academic ineligibility and junior end Nick Faulkner from injury.

SPECIALISTS The Flashes feature one of the top punters in the nation in junior Derek Adams, who earned second-team All-MAC honors after averaging 43.6 yards per punt in 2017.

FINAL ANALYSIS Lewis, the youngest head coach in the country (age 31), has supplied a much-needed jolt of energy to a program that's been beaten down for decades. But keeping the mood positive once the season opens will be difficult, especially with four road trips in the first five weeks, including games at Illinois, Penn State and Ole Miss.

To become competitive for the first time since the 11-win season of 2012, the Flashes must first generate some consistent offense. No team in the nation has scored fewer points over the last four years than Kent State. That's why Lewis was hired.

If nothing else, the team will be much more fun to watch in 2018, with Lewis calling the shots in a fast-paced attack. His system will breed a star or two per usual, and if one of them is a quarterback, the Flashes could pull off a few surprises in 2018 — and set the stage for much bigger and better things in the years to come.



JIM JONES

"Another total rebuild for that program. Expect to see them try to replicate Dino Babers' Bowling Green offense, but that won't show up this season."

— An opposing MAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (4)					
WR	20	Trey Harrell (Jr.)	87	Mike Carrigan (Jr.)	
WR	80	Johnny Woods (Sr.)	19	Donte Ross (Sr.)	
WR	24	Raekwon James (Sr.)	10	Kavious Price (Jr.)	
LT	64	**Bryce Gibbs (Jr.)**	71	Eddie Brecht (So.)	
LG	74	**Nate Warnock (Jr.)**	69	Sam Allan (Fr.)	
C	76	Chase Van Hoef (Jr.)	70	Jacob Belleli (Fr.)	
RG	68	Mike Marinelli (Jr.)	78	Zach Corrigall (So.)	
RT	75	Adam Gregoire (Jr.)	77	Chalftonte Butler (Jr.)	
TE	88	Conor Brumfield (Jr.)	47	Nathan Monnin (So.)	
QB	15	Woody Barrett (So.)	14	Dustin Crum (So.)	
RB	11	**Justin Rankin (Jr.)**	21	**Will Matthews (Jr.)**	
DEFENSE (5)					
DE	58	**Theo Eboigbe (Sr.)**	53	Alex Hoag (Jr.)	
NT	49	Kalil Morris (Sr.)	98	Dominic Hill (Jr.)	
DE	17	**Nick Faulkner (Jr.)**	97	Zayin West (Fr.)	
OLB	37	Cepeda Phillips (So.)	42	Danny Johnson (Jr.)	
ILB	22	**Jim Jones (Sr.)**	35	Sam Thomas (So.)	
ILB	6	Matt Bahr (Sr.)	50	Sebastian Spear (So.)	
OLB	32	Dalton Hicks (Jr.)	48	Bernard Russ (Fr.)	
CB	33	**Jamal Parker (Jr.)**	15	KJ Sherald (So.)	
CB	8	Elvis Hines (So.)	30	Darryl Marshall (Sr.)	
FS	28	Mandela Lawrence-Burke (Jr.)	10	Quan Robinson (Sr.)	
SS	25	Juantez McRae (Sr.)	13	Erik Simpson (Sr.)	
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K	94	Grant Urenovitch (So.)	KR	10 Kavious Price (Jr.)	
P	96	Derek Adams (Jr.)	PR	10 Kavious Price (Jr.)	

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Dustin Crum, 30-16-232 -2, 1 TD
Rushing: Justin Rankin, 123 att., 490 yds., 3 TDs
Receiving: Justin Rankin, 42 rec., 311 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Jim Jones, 98
Sacks: Jim Jones, 6.0
Interceptions: Six players tied with 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Sean Lewis
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: First Season
Offensive Coordinator: Andrew Sowder
Defensive Coordinator: Tom Kaufman
Kent, OH • Dix Stadium (25,319)

Kent State Athletics

Miami RedHawks

National Forecast: **88** • MAC East Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **6-6, 5-3 MAC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Marshall
Sept.	8	at Cincinnati #
Sept.	15	at Minnesota
Sept.	22	at Bowling Green
Sept.	29	Western Michigan
Oct.	6	at Akron
Oct.	13	Kent State
Oct.	20	at Army
Oct.	30	at Buffalo
Nov.	7	Ohio
Nov.	14	at Northern Illinois
Nov.	20	Ball State

#Paul Brown Stadium

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 4-4 MAC

Sept.	2	at Marshall	L	26-31
Sept.	9	Austin Peay	W	31-10
Sept.	16	Cincinnati	L	17-21
Sept.	23	at Central Michigan	W	31-14
Sept.	30	at Notre Dame	L	17-52
Oct.	7	Bowling Green	L	29-37
Oct.	14	at Kent State	L	14-17
Oct.	21	Buffalo	W	24-14
Oct.	31	at Ohio	L	28-45
Nov.	7	Akron	W	24-14
Nov.	15	Eastern Michigan	L	24-27
Nov.	21	at Ball State	W	28-7

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Maleak Bryant, TE, Atlanta, GA
2. Kameron Butler, DE, Florence, KY
3. AJ Mayer, QB, Edgewood, KY
4. Andrew Todd, OG, Cedar Rapids, IA
5. Bennett Clark, OT, Zionsville, IN
6. Cecil Singleton, DB, Cincinnati, OH
7. Blake Underwood, S, East Lansing, MI
8. Will Kellison, DE, Indianapolis, IN
9. Cam Blakely, WR, Knoxville, TN
10. Ja'don Rucker-Furlow, CB, Dayton, OH

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	24.4 ppg	9	97
Rushing	146.9 ypg	8	88
Passing	237.7 ypg	5	59
Total	384.6 ypg	8	89
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	24.1 ppg	3	43
Rushing	166.8 ypg	4	66
Passing	200.8 ypg	4	36
Total	367.6 ypg	3	45
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
-1	-0.08	6	72

STAT CORNER

.227

Miami is 5-17 in games decided by one possession since 2014, a .227 win pct. The RedHawks were 0-5 in such games in 2017.

OFFENSE Quarterback Gus Ragland, the architect of 2016's six-game winning streak, is back for his senior season as one of eight returning offensive starters. He'll be backed up by Alex Malzone, a graduate transfer from Michigan.

Graduation cost Miami two starting wide receivers and the starting tight end, but first-team All-MAC wideout James Gardner returns, and Nate Becker has seen plenty of action at tight end. Becker is known more for his blocking, and with five returning starters in the interior line, the RedHawks might lean more on a running game that features last season's top five ground gainers. That doesn't include Maurice Thomas, who was part of the running back rotation before missing the last nine games with an injury. He was expected to be ready for fall camp.

The offensive line will be experienced and deep, especially with the return from injury of Danny Godlevske and Tommy Doyle, who were limited to a combined five starts last season.

DEFENSE Miami's defense is similarly blessed with eight returning starters, including outside linebacker Brad Koenig, last season's top tackler. He also led the RedHawks with 10.5 tackles for a loss. Doug Costin also is an effective penetrator, but a move from end to tackle might make penetration a problem. He led Miami with five sacks and 10 quarterback hurries in 2017. Nate Trawick returns at one defensive tackle after already logging 25 starts.

Like the wide receiver corps, Miami's defensive backfield took a hit with the loss of safety Tony Reid and cornerback Heath Harding, last season's second- and third-leading tacklers. Expect talented junior college transfer Zedrick Raymond to step in at corner opposite Deondre Daniels, who has started 22 games. Raymond had six interceptions at Independence (Kan.) Community College. De'Andre Montgomery is being moved from outside linebacker back to his more natural strong safety position next to free safety Joshua Allen, who led Miami with three interceptions.

SPECIALISTS The only opening on Miami's special teams was at punt returner after the graduation of Jared Murphy. Samuel Sloman returns after connecting on 12-of-16 field goal attempts as a sophomore.

FINAL ANALYSIS After bouncing back from a 0–6 start to finish 6–6 and earn a bowl bid in 2016, the RedHawks took a step back with a 5–7 record in 2017. Four of their losses were by five points or fewer and were the result of critical Miami mistakes. Down by one to Bowling Green, the RedHawks had first down on the Falcons' 1-yard line with just over than a minute left when a shotgun snap grazed a blocking back and fell for a fumble that a Falcon picked up and returned for a TD.

Despite the numerous and costly mental breakdowns, coach Chuck Martin saw his contract extended for two years, through the 2020 season. He has spent the first four seasons building up the roster, both in talent and physicality, and he feels now that the RedHawks are in an enviable position with experienced players who are better able to physically compete in the MAC.

Miami will be tested by a challenging schedule that includes only five true home games. The RedHawks are due to play archrival Cincinnati at the Bengals' Paul Brown Stadium, and they face a grueling stretch of three road trips to Army, Buffalo and Northern Illinois in the second half of the season.



GUS RAGLAND

"Chuck Martin is a good coach and program builder, but it hasn't shown up in the record. He knows he's got a big year ahead to prove himself."

— An opposing MAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

		OFFENSE (8)			DEFENSE (8)
WR	81	**James Gardner (Sr.)**	88	Mitchell Lewis (Fr.)	
WR	86	Luke Mayock (Jr.)	4	Jack Sorenson (So.)	
WR	11	Dominique Robinson (So.)	85	Tyler Fleetwood (So.)	
LT	52	**Jordan Rigg (Sr.)**	78	Ian Leever (Jr.)	
LG	66	**Sam McCollum (Sr.)**	50	Ryan Mullen (Sr.)	
C	51	Danny Godlevske (So.)	56	**Mitch Palmer (Sr.)**	
RG	75	**Jarrett LaRubbio (Jr.)**	64	David Redding (Fr.)	
RT	54	Tommy Doyle (So.)	77	**Matt Skibinski (Jr.)**	
TE	44	Nate Becker (Sr.)	46	Andrew Homer (So.)	
QB	14	**Gus Ragland (Sr.)**		Alex Malzone (Sr.)	
RB	26	**Alonzo Smith (Sr.)**	3	Kenny Young (Sr.)	
DE	30	Josh Maize (So.)	95	Ben Kimpler (So.)	
DT	58	**Doug Costin (Jr.)**	34	Isaac Hampton (Fr.)	
DT	96	**Nate Trawick (Sr.)**	99	Elijah Watson (So.)	
DE	92	**Pasquale Calcagno (Sr.)**	90	Dean Lemon (Jr.)	
OLB	38	**Brad Koenig (Sr.)**	17	Myles Reid (Jr.)	
MLB	5	**Junior McMullen (Sr.)**	52	Cam Turner (So.)	
OLB	49	Bart Baratti (Jr.)	23	Ryan Newton (Fr.)	
CB	15	**Deondre Daniels (Sr.)**	1	Cedric Asseh (Jr.)	
CB	14	Zedrick Raymond (Jr.)	6	Travion Banks (Jr.)	
FS	2	**Joshua Allen (Sr.)**	28	Mike Brown (So.)	
SS	21	**De'Andre Montgomery (Sr.)**	8	Daryus Thompson (Jr.)	

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	79	Samuel Sloman (Jr.)	KR	3	Kenny Young (Sr.)
P	9	Kyle Kramer (Jr.)	PR	18	Jaylon Bester (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Gus Ragland, 269-150-2,032-7, 19 TDs
Rushing: Kenny Young, 145 att., 781 yds., 6 TDs
Receiving: James Gardner, 47 rec., 927 yds., 11 TDs
Tackles: Brad Koenig, 103
Sacks: Doug Costin, 5.0
Interceptions: Joshua Allen, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Chuck Martin
Record at School: 16-33 (4 years)
Career Record: 90-40 (10 years)
Offensive Coordinators: George Barnett, Eric Koehler
Defensive Coordinators: John Hauser, Spence Nowinsky
Oxford, OH • Yager Stadium (24,286)

Ricardo Trevino/Miami University

Ohio **Bobcats**

National Forecast: **71** • MAC East Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **10-3, 6-2 MAC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at Nebraska
Sept.	8	Morgan State
Sept.	15	at Northwestern
Sept.	22	at Iowa State
Oct.	6	Miami (Ohio)
Oct.	13	at Buffalo
Oct.	20	at Kent State
Oct.	27	Central Michigan
Nov.	1	Northern Illinois
Nov.	10	at Eastern Michigan
Nov.	17	Bowling Green
Nov.	23	at Ohio

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 9-4, 5-3 MAC

Sept.	2	Hampton	W	59-0
Sept.	8	at Purdue	L	21-44
Sept.	16	Kansas	W	42-30
Sept.	23	at Eastern Mich. (ot)	W	27-20
Sept.	30	at Massachusetts	W	58-50
Oct.	7	Central Michigan	L	23-26
Oct.	14	at Bowling Green	W	48-30
Oct.	21	Kent State	W	48-3
Oct.	31	Miami (Ohio)	W	45-28
Nov.	8	Toledo	W	38-10
Nov.	14	at Akron	L	34-37
Nov.	24	at Buffalo	L	24-31
Dec.	22	vs. UAB #	W	41-6

#Bahamas Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Zach Burks, DT, Olathe, KS*
2. Jeremiah Wood, S, Pickerington, OH
3. Jamison Collier, S, Snellville, GA
4. Shane Hooks, WR, Orlando, FL
5. Alec Burton, TE, Danville, IN
6. Bryce Stai, DE, Lincoln, NE
7. Bryce Ramer, OT, Beaver, PA
8. Jack McCrory, ILB, Springfield, OH
9. Justin Birchette, CB, Palm Beach Gardens, FL
10. Joe Mischler, QB, Erie, PA

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	39.1 ppg	1	9
Rushing	244.5 ypg	1	16
Passing	188.5 ypg	9	96
Total	433.1 ypg	2	34
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	24.2 ppg	4	44
Rushing	110.5 ypg	1	10
Passing	261.2 ypg	12	110
Total	371.6 ypg	5	50
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
-4	-0.31	9	90

STAT CORNER

+1.9

Ohio averaged 7.1 yards per play on first down and allowed 5.3. This plus-1.9 per-play margin was 10th in FBS and first in the MAC.

OFFENSE Junior quarterback Nathan Rourke (912 rushing yards, 2,203 passing yards, 39 total TDs) was a revelation for Ohio in 2017. The Canadian-born junior college transfer won the starting job by Week 3 and turned in the most productive season for an Ohio quarterback in program history.

Rourke — and a bruising ground game that averaged almost 250 yards — helped Ohio to a program-record 39.1 points per game. With Rourke and backup QB Quinton Maxwell (eight career starts) in place for 2018, there are hopes in Athens for even more this season.

Senior A.J. Ouellette (1,006 yards) returns in the backfield, and senior Maleek Irons is back after a season-long suspension in 2017. The Bobcats return two starting wideouts, including big-play specialist Papi White and fellow senior burner Andrew Meyer. The duo combined for 71 receptions, 1,114 yards and five touchdowns in 2017.

The offensive line will be among the best in the conference with four returning starters, including All-MAC selections on the left side with tackle Joe Lowery and guard Joe Anderson.

Ohio knocked it out of the park offensively in 2017, with one exception: turnovers. The Bobcats had a minus-4 turnover margin, and Rourke, in his first season at the D-I level, was guilty of 12 turnovers (seven INTs, five lost fumbles). With Rourke's continued development, and the talent in place around him, that number should drop in 2018.

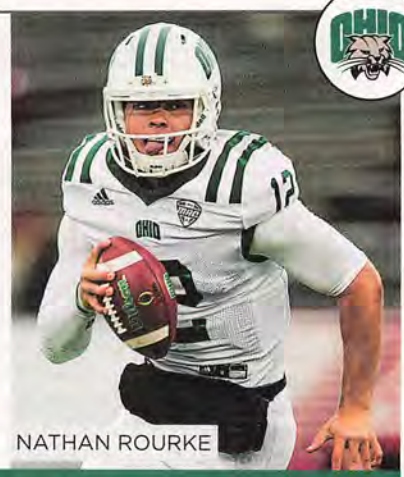
DEFENSE For the past two seasons, the Bobcats have featured the best run defense in the MAC. That likely won't be the case in 2018, and it will shine a spotlight on a secondary desperate to show improvement. Ohio must replace six starters in the front seven, including one of the program's all-time greats in middle linebacker Quentin Poling. Senior outside backer Evan Croutch is the lone returning starter in the front seven, but Dylan Conner and Tyler Gullett got extensive work last fall. In the middle, junior Austin Clack and sophomore Jared Dorsa will try to fill the void left by Poling.

On the line, new interior starters Kent Berger and Andrew Payne were effective rotational players a year ago. A pair of junior college transfers — Cole Baker and Zach Burks — will be needed to provide quality depth. The Bobcats will be young at defensive end with a trio of sophomores — Amir Miller, Will Evans and Austin Conrad — eating up a lot of reps.

Defensive coordinator Jimmy Burrow hopes his secondary, now the more seasoned part of the defense, can improve enough to counter any expected drop in the run defense. Junior safety Javon Hagan is one of the best playmakers in the MAC.

SPECIALISTS The Bobcats had the most complete, and best, collection of special teams units in the MAC last season, and that strength should continue in 2018. Junior Louie Zervos remained the most accurate (83.3 percent) placekicker in the league. Junior punter Michael Farkas has not yet had a punt blocked in his career, and more than 60 percent of his punts were not returned. Also back are top punt returners White and Kylan Nelson, and top kickoff returner Julian Ross.

FINAL ANALYSIS Ohio will be a favorite to win the MAC East in 2018, and if the defense finds its traditional form, then it could be a big year for the Bobcats. The real drama for Ohio will be to see if it can end the program's MAC championship drought, which extends back to 1968.



NATHAN ROURKE

"This is a team that could easily win the division — and the league — this year if they get more of the same kind of play from the quarterback position."

— An opposing MAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (9)

WR	8	Elijah Ball (Jr.)	**3**	**Cam Odom (So)**	
WR	**4**	**Papi White (Sr.)**	19	DL Knock (Jr.)	
WR	**9**	**Andrew Meyer (Sr.)**	11	Willie Cherry (Fr.)	
LT	**65**	**Joe Lowery (Sr.)**	53	Marques Grimes (Jr)	
LG	**63**	**Joe Anderson (Sr.)**	68	Felipe Fernandez (So.)	
C	73	Steven Hayes (Jr.)	61	Brett Kittrell (So.)	
RG	**76**	**Hagen Meservy (So.)**	57	Durrell Wood (Sr.)	
RT	**60**	**Austen Pleasants (Jr.)**	79	Kyle Kuhar (Jr.)	
TE	83	Connor Brown (Sr.)	88	Ryan Luehrman (So.)	
QB	**12**	**Nathan Rourke (Jr.)**	7	Quinton Maxwell (Jr.)	
RB	**45**	**A.J. Ouellette (Sr.)**	21	Maleek Irons (Sr.)	

DEFENSE (4)

DE	95	Amir Miller (So.)	84	Austin Conrad (So.)
DT	97	Kent Berger (Sr.)	91	Cole Baker (Jr.)
NT	48	Andrew Payne (Sr.)	92	Zach Burks (Jr.)
DE	51	Will Evans (So.)	98	Chukwudi Chukwu (Jr.)
OLB	35	Dylan Conner (So.)	25	Tyler Gullett (Sr.)
MLB	49	Jared Dorsa (So.)	36	Austin Clack (Jr.)
OLB	**47**	**Evan Croutch (Sr.)**	34	Eric Popp (Jr.)
CB	**21**	**Jalen Fox (Sr.)**	17	Tariq Drake (Fr.)
CB	22	Marlin Brooks (So.)	4	Jamal Hudson (So.)
S	**7**	**Javon Hagan (Jr.)**	24	Alvin Floyd (Fr.)
S	**23**	**Kylan Nelson (Sr.)**	12	Jarren Hampton (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	2	Louie Zervos (Jr.)	**KR**	10	Julian Ross (So.)
P	89	Michael Farkas (Jr.)	**PR**	4	Papi White (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Nathan Rourke, 292-161-2,203-7, 17 TDs
Rushing: A.J. Ouellette, 192 att., 1,006 yds., 7 TDs
Receiving: Papi White, 36 rec., 631 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: Javon Hagan, 85
Sacks: Andrew Payne, 3.0
Interceptions: Jalen Fox, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Frank Solich
Record at School: 97-71 (13 years)
Career Record: 155-90 (19 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Tim Albin, Scott Isphording
Defensive Coordinators: Jimmy Burrow, Ron Collins
Athens, OH • Peden Stadium (24,000)

Ohio University Athletics

Ball State **Cardinals**

National Forecast: **120** • MAC West Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **3-9, 2-6 MAC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	Central Connecticut St.
Sept.	8	at Notre Dame
Sept.	15	at Indiana
Sept.	22	Western Kentucky
Sept.	29	Kent State
Oct.	6	Northern Illinois
Oct.	13	at Central Michigan
Oct.	20	Eastern Michigan
Oct.	25	at Ohio
Oct.	31	at Toledo
Nov.	13	Western Michigan
Nov.	20	at Miami (Ohio)

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 2-10, 0-8 MAC

Sept.	2	at Illinois	L	21-24
Sept.	9	UAB	W	51-31
Sept.	16	Tennessee Tech	W	28-13
Sept.	23	at Western Kentucky	L	21-33
Sept.	30	at Western Michigan	L	3-55
Oct.	7	at Akron	L	3-31
Oct.	21	Central Michigan	L	9-56
Oct.	26	Toledo	L	17-58
Nov.	2	at Eastern Michigan	L	14-56
Nov.	9	at Northern Illinois	L	17-63
Nov.	16	Buffalo	L	24-40
Nov.	21	Miami (Ohio)	L	7-28

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Thomas Lopez, OT, Middletown, NJ
2. Luke Martin, OG, Fisher, IN
3. Kyron Mims, DT, Baton Rouge, LA
4. Yo'Heinz Tyler, WR, New Orleans, LA
5. Ray Wilborn, OLB, Lansing, MI*
6. Jaylen Turner, C, Indianapolis, IN
7. John Paddock, QB, Bloomfield Hills, MI
8. Wes Obermeier, TE, Fort Branch, IN
9. Tye Evans, RB, Macedonia, OH
10. Shannon Hall, DE, Indianapolis, IN*

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	17.9 ppg	11	122
Rushing	158.0 ypg	5	73
Passing	177.2 ypg	10	104
Total	335.2 ypg	10	111
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	40.7 ppg	12	125
Rushing	188.0 ypg	8	91
Passing	233.6 ypg	9	78
Total	421.6 ypg	10	88
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
-9	-0.75	12	116

STAT CORNER

-3.2

Over the last eight games, Ball State allowed 7.2 yards per play and gained just 4.0, a devastating margin of minus-3.2 per play.

OFFENSE Ball State scored just 10 touchdowns in MAC play last year while losing every league game by at least 16 points. Not that Mike Neu's Cardinals planned to challenge Oklahoma for the title of college's best offense, but it's crucial to remember that Ball State lost its third-year starting quarterback, All-MAC running back, top returning receiver and two best offensive linemen before MACtion got underway.

"It was like we were stuck in a tornado and we couldn't get out of it," Neu says. "We can't make any excuses about it. We had to play a lot of young guys faster than we were ready for. But that was one consistent message I tried to impart to our team: 'Yes, it's difficult right now, but we're going to be better in the long run.'"

The running game is just one example. Star running back James Gilbert (1,332 yards, 12 TDs in 2016) played only three games before tearing a ligament in his right thumb. In his stead, freshman Caleb Huntley rushed for 1,003 yards, and junior Malik Dunner added eight rushing TDs while averaging 5.9 yards per carry. Ball State's brain trust worked all offseason to find ways to get at least two — and sometimes all three — of these weapons on the field at the same time.

"We have a three-headed monster," Neu says.

Junior quarterback Riley Neal completed 68 percent of his passes for 659 yards and six TDs in the first three games but spent the rest of the year on the sidelines with a tibial plateau fracture in his right knee. Neal was granted a medical redshirt, as were Gilbert, wide receiver Corey Lacanaria and guard Alex Joss.

Neal's top target will be Justin Hall, who caught 78 passes en route to earning Freshman All-America honors in 2017.

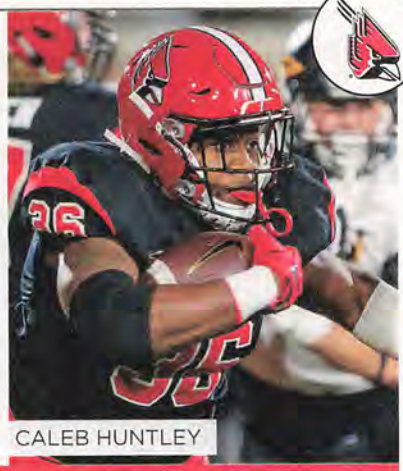
DEFENSE Ball State's offensive woes had a trickle-down effect on a young defense that spent too much time on the field and surrendered 48.4 points per game in MAC play. While the Cardinals lose the services of graduated defensive end Anthony Winbush, one of the nation's leading sack artists, second-year coordinator David Elson spent the offseason switching from a 4-3 to a 3-4. Not only does that jibe with his preferences, but it's also better suited for Ball State's personnel.

The Cardinals welcome back last year's top three tacklers in junior middle linebacker Jacob White, sophomore strong safety Bryce Cosby and sophomore linebacker Brandon Martin. Martin is moving from the strong to the weak side to take advantage of his playmaking abilities.

Keep an eye on sophomore Christian Albright, who'll line up at outside linebacker and fill Winbush's pass-rushing role. Junior college transfer Ray Wilborn, an early enrollee, steps into the starting lineup as well.

SPECIALISTS Kick returner Malik Dunner earned third-team All-MAC honors after averaging 24.4 yards per return, including a 93-yard TD in the win over UAB. Senior placekicker Morgan Hagee was automatic during his first two seasons but converted just 6-of-11 from 30 to 47 yards last season. Ball State was next to last nationally in net punting — a stat that is exacerbated when you punt 75 times in a 12-game season.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Cardinals should show significant improvement across the board — assuming they don't suffer a similar rash of injuries. That, however, might not be enough for them to make a significant move in the MAC West, the more challenging of the league's two divisions.



CALEB HUNTLEY

"Injuries created a totally different team by the time conference play started. You could see on film what they wanted to do, but they couldn't pull it off."

— An opposing MAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)					
WR	**86**	**Riley Miller (Jr.)**	19	Devin Reece (Sr.)	
WR	**12**	**Justin Hall (So.)**	16	Hassan Littles (So.)	
WR	11	Corey Lacanaria (Sr.)	87	Khalil Newton (So.)	
LT	**77**	**Kaleb Slaven (So.)**		Thomas Lopez (Jr.)	
LG	70	Alex Joss (Sr.)	**71**	**Zac Ricketts (Jr.)**	
C	**64**	**Andrew Poenitsch (Jr.)**	55	Chris Beech (So.)	
RG	**62**	**Curtis Blackwell (So.)**	63	Grant Williamson (Jr.)	
RT	75	Danny Pinter (Jr.)	72	Anthony Todd (So.)	
TE	**88**	**Nolan Givan (So.)**	8	Cody Rudy (So.)	
QB	15	Riley Neal (Jr.)	12	Drew Plitt (So.)	
RB	34	James Gilbert (Jr.)	**36**	**Caleb Huntley (So.)**	
DEFENSE (5)					
DE	90	Sean Hammonds (Jr.)	59	Kyle Williams (Fr.)	
NT	42	Chris Crumb (Jr.)	60	Poni Tu'uta (Fr.)	
DE	52	Fred Schroeder (Sr.)	35	James Jennette III (So.)	
OLB	51	Christian Albright (So.)	97	Jordan Williams (Fr.)	
ILB	11	Ray Wilborn (Jr.)	44	Brock Burns (Fr.)	
ILB	**2**	**Jacob White (Jr.)**	27	Jimmy Daw (Fr.)	
OLB	26	Brandon Martin (So.)	32	Jeremiah Jackson (Sr.)	
CB	**7**	**Marc Walton (Sr.)**	21	Antonio Phillips (So.)	
CB	**3**	**Josh Miller (Sr.)**	15	Verenzo Holmes Jr. (So.)	
FS	23	Brett Anderson II (So.)	**31**	**Romero Wade (Jr.)**	
SS	**17**	**Bryce Cosby (So.)**	10	Lamar Anderson (Jr.)	
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K	22	Morgan Hagee (Sr.)	**KR**	4 Malik Dunner (Jr.)	
P	38	Nathan Snyder (So.)	**PR**	11 Corey Lacanaria (Sr.)	

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Riley Neal, 99-67-659-3, 6 TDs
Rushing: Caleb Huntley, 210 att., 1,003 yds., 3 TDs
Receiving: Justin Hall, 78 rec., 801 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: Jacob White, 72
Sacks: Jacob White, 3.0
Interceptions: Bryce Cosby, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mike Neu
Record at School: 6-18 (2 years)
Career Record: 6-18 (2 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Joey Lynch
Defensive Coordinator: David Elson
Muncie, IN • Scheumann Stadium (22,500)

Michael Hickey

Central Michigan **Chippewas**

National Forecast: **105** • MAC West Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **5-7, 4-4 MAC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at Kentucky
Sept.	8	Kansas
Sept.	15	at Northern Illinois
Sept.	22	Maine
Sept.	29	at Michigan State
Oct.	6	Buffalo
Oct.	13	Ball State
Oct.	20	Western Michigan
Oct.	27	at Akron
Nov.	3	at Eastern Michigan
Nov.	10	Bowling Green
Nov.	23	at Toledo

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 6-2 MAC

Aug.	31	Rhode Island (ot)	W	30-27
Sept.	9	at Kansas	W	45-27
Sept.	16	at Syracuse	L	17-41
Sept.	23	Miami (Ohio)	L	14-31
Sept.	30	at Boston College	L	8-28
Oct.	7	at Ohio	W	26-23
Oct.	14	Toledo	L	10-30
Oct.	21	at Ball State	W	56-9
Nov.	1	at Western Mich.	W	35-28
Nov.	8	Eastern Michigan	W	42-30
Nov.	14	at Kent State	W	42-23
Nov.	24	Northern Illinois	W	31-24
Dec.	22	vs. Wyoming #	L	14-37

#Famous Idaho Potato Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Keonta Nixon, WR, Roselle, IL
2. Randall Harris, CB, Walled Lake, MI
3. Montrae Braswell, CB, Avon Park, FL
4. George Pearson, QB, Matawan, NJ
5. LaQuan Johnson, DE, Burton, MI
6. Tyden Ferris, DE, Delton, MI
7. Carlton Cleophat, OLB, Pompano Beach, FL
8. Tico Brown, DT, Kokomo, IN
9. Jonathan Clark, RB, Hackensack, NJ
10. Joel Wilson, QB, Petoskey, MI

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	28.5 ppg	6	63
Rushing	134.1 ypg	10	102
Passing	255.7 ypg	4	43
Total	389.8 ypg	4	77
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	27.5 ppg	7	71
Rushing	185.2 ypg	7	88
Passing	185.5 ypg	1	20
Total	370.8 ypg	4	49
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
0	0.00	5	64

STAT CORNER

+2.0

CMU's per-play yardage margin was minus-0.5 through seven games, but it was plus-2.0 (6.4 gained, 4.4 allowed) during a 5-0 streak.

OFFENSE Last year's Chippewas offense received a boost when quarterback Shane Morris played his final year of eligibility for the Maroon and Gold after transferring from Michigan, but now CMU must turn to a new signal caller in sophomore Tony Poljan.

Poljan's size (6'7", 237) might not make him a running threat in Central Michigan's spread offense, but he has solid athleticism and a strong arm. Whether he has the accuracy and decision-making skills needed to man the spot as an untested sophomore will be the key to whether the Chippewas offense moves the chains consistently.

Central Michigan finally found a running back it could trust last year in Jonathan Ward, who not only is the leading returning rusher (1,019 yards) but also tops among returning pass catchers (48 for 470 yards). The Illinois native should be one of the league's most versatile offensive weapons as a junior.

The biggest question: Who will catch the other passes? Gone are the top three wideouts and top tight end from 2017. Look for underclassmen such as Brandon Childress, Bailey Edwards and Drayton Law to be among those who fill the void.

As for the offensive line, it goes into a fourth straight year as a question mark, but there were promising signs last season that perhaps a corner had been turned. Left guard Shakir Carr is the top player of the group and could be in line for all-conference honors.

DEFENSE After ranking fourth in the MAC in total defense last year — and No. 2 in conference games (349.4 ypg) — the Chippewas could be in the upper third again if they can fill a few holes.

Junior Sean Bunting, who intercepted five passes in 2017, will inherit No. 1 cornerback responsibilities with the graduation of three-year starter Amari Coleman. Bunting has the potential to be an All-MAC performer, although the interceptions could drop if he is challenged fewer times. Another three-year starter, safety Josh Cox, also graduated, and the candidates to fill that position are untested. While CMU should have the athletes to get the job done at cornerback, there is a chance they take a step back at safety.

Linebacker is in good hands with the return of All-MAC performer Malik Fountain (89 tackles) and fellow senior Alex Briones (83). The defensive line lost a couple key contributors and is fairly thin in numbers but also has enough talent to be a strength of the defense. Expect junior Mike Danna to be a handful.

SPECIALISTS Jerrod Davis emerged late in the season as a big-time threat in the return game, taking his first-ever kickoff return 98 yards for a touchdown in CMU's win at Kent State. For the year, he averaged 26.7 yards on 18 returns. Seniors Jack Sheldon (43.4-yard average) and Michael Armstrong (7-of-11 field goals) give the Chippewas a pair of adequate kickers.

FINAL ANALYSIS A lot of what Central Michigan does this season will tie in with the development of Poljan and the inexperienced wide receiver group. Every other position group should be satisfactory to strong, so those could be the final pieces of the puzzle in taking another step forward. The Chippewas have a fairly difficult schedule with three Power 5 opponents in addition to the MAC slate, which is bookended by road games at Northern Illinois and Toledo. At least rival Western Michigan is a home game.



JONATHAN WARD

"What stood out last season was a really physical, mean defense. They could get after it against the pass with some speed up front and smart play in the secondary."

— An opposing MAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (3)

WR	18	Brandon Childress (So.)	17	JaCorey Sullivan (So.)	
WR	80	Drayton Law (Fr.)	82	Cameron Cole (Jr.)	
WR	84	Bailey Edwards (Fr.)	9	Damon Terry (Jr.)	
LT	78	Clay Walderzak (Sr.)	75	Jeff Strome (Jr.)	
LG	**70**	**Shakir Carr (Sr.)**	56	Derek Smith (So.)	
C	58	Joe Komel (Sr.)	65	Nick Follmer (Fr.)	
RG	**60**	**Steve Eipper (Jr.)**	77	Anday Adado (Jr.)	
RT	64	Alex Neering (Sr.)	68	Erik Ditzhazy (Fr.)	
TE	87	Logan Hessbrook (Sr.)	85	Jonathan Carson (Sr.)	
QB	1	Tony Poljan (So.)	7	Tommy Lazzaro (Sr.)	
RB	**5**	**Jonathan Ward (Jr.)**	34	Romello Ross (Jr.)	

DEFENSE (6)

DE	**44**	**Mitch Stanitzek (Sr.)**	52	Leon Page (So.)	
DT	**95**	**D'Andre Dill (Jr.)**	71	Robi Stuart (So.)	
DT	**46**	**Nathan Brisson-Fast (Sr.)**	92	Dante Cleveland (So.)	
DE	57	Mike Danna (Jr.)	34	Amir Siddiq (Fr.)	
OLB	**17**	**Alex Briones (Sr.)**	11	Trevor Apsey (Sr.)	
MLB	**8**	**Malik Fountain (Sr.)**	41	Trevor Conklin (Jr.)	
OLB	39	Michael Oliver (Jr.)	19	Bobby Banks (Jr.)	
CB	**3**	**Sean Bunting (Jr.)**	1	Alonzo McCoy (So.)	
CB	6	Da'Quaun Jamison (Jr.)	15	Tee'Ondre Harvey (So.)	
FS	36	Tyjuan Swain (Sr.)	12	Marcel Ray (So.)	
SS	10	Zach Oakley (Sr.)	20	Gage Kreski (So.)	

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	37	Michael Armstrong (Sr.)	**KR**	28	Jerrod Davis (Jr.)
P	99	Jack Sheldon (Sr.)	**PR**	4	Jamil Sabbagh (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Tony Poljan, 21-13-78-0, 0 TDs
Rushing: Jonathan Ward, 178 att., 1,019 yds., 10 TDs
Receiving: Jonathan Ward, 48 rec., 470 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: Malik Fountain, 89
Sacks: Nathan Brisson-Fast, 5.5
Interceptions: Sean Bunting, 5

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: John Bonamego
Record at School: 21-18 (3 years)
Career Record: 21-18 (3 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Chris Ostrowksy
Defensive Coordinator: Greg Colby
Mount Pleasant, MI • Kelly/Shorts Stadium (30,255)

Central Michigan Athletics

Eastern Michigan **Eagles**

National Forecast: **106** • MAC West Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **4-8, 3-5 MAC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Monmouth
Sept.	8	at Purdue
Sept.	15	at Buffalo
Sept.	22	at San Diego State
Sept.	29	Northern Illinois
Oct.	6	at Western Michigan
Oct.	13	Toledo
Oct.	20	at Ball State
Oct.	27	Army
Nov.	3	Central Michigan
Nov.	10	Akron
Nov.	23	at Kent State

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 3-5 MAC

Sept.	1	Charlotte	W	24-7
Sept.	9	at Rutgers	W	16-13
Sept.	23	Ohio	(ot) L	20-27
Sept.	30	at Kentucky	L	20-24
Oct.	7	at Toledo	L	15-20
Oct.	14	at Army	L	27-28
Oct.	21	Western Michigan	(ot) L	17-20
Oct.	26	at Northern Illinois	(ot) L	27-30
Nov.	2	Ball State	W	56-14
Nov.	8	at Central Michigan	L	30-42
Nov.	15	at Miami (Ohio)	W	27-24
Nov.	21	Bowling Green	W	34-31

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Isaiah Watson, CB, Towson, MD
2. Carter Stagner, DE, Birmingham, MI
3. Alex Howie, C, Canton, MI
4. Robert Daniel, CB, Oak Park, MI
5. Timarcus Simpson, CB, Tampa, FL
6. EJ Williams, S, Indianapolis, IN
7. Dylan Drummond, WR, Cleveland, OH
8. Jerodd Vines, S, Detroit, MI
9. Logan Giordano, WR, Davie, FL
10. Marcellus Johnson, OT, Normal, IL

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	26.1 ppg	7	82
Rushing	129.6 ypg	11	107
Passing	257.3 ypg	3	42
Total	386.9 ypg	6	83
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	23.3 ppg	2	40
Rushing	173.3 ypg	5	76
Passing	190.3 ypg	2	23
Total	363.6 ypg	2	39
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
-4	-0.33	10	93

STAT CORNER

6

EMU lost six games in a row in 2017, all by seven or fewer points. One of the worst runs of close-game fortune you'll see.

OFFENSE It will be strange to watch an Eastern Michigan offense tick without quarterback Brogan Roback, who graduated after throwing for 8,653 yards and 57 touchdowns over the course of five different seasons.

Graduate transfer Tyler Wiegers, previously at Iowa, could inherit the quarterback role after getting lost in the shuffle with the Hawkeyes. His competition will be sophomore Isaac Stiebeling (8-of-17 for 49 yards in limited duty), with the edge probably going to the veteran Wiegers as long as he can get a handle on the offense.

All five starters return on the offensive line, giving it a leg up as potentially one of the top units in the MAC.

The Eagles will be in safe hands at running back with seniors Ian Eriksen (810 yards) and Shaq Vann (520), but don't expect a lot of huge plays — especially with defenses stacking the line. What will help is the aforementioned O-line opening holes on a consistent basis.

Gone are the top three receivers from 2017, with junior Mathew Sexton (26 catches) representing the top returner. This could be a group that does well in moving the chains, but finding a burner for big plays down the field could be a challenge.

DEFENSE There is plenty of experience back with this group, including a plethora of talented defensive backs and both defensive ends. With so much returning from a unit that was second in the conference in total defense (363.6 ypg) and second in pass defense (190.3 ypg), optimism should be high.

Among the stalwarts back in the fold are pass rushers Maxx Crosby (11 sacks) and Jeremiah Harris (six), while the secondary has many leaders, including Ikie Calderon — granted a medical redshirt after getting injured early last season.

The depth on the defensive line and in the secondary is impressive, and senior Kyle Rachwal should be given the opportunity to lead an otherwise untested linebacker group.

There is no reason this defense shouldn't be among the conference's best in 2018.

SPECIALISTS Jake Julien was solid at punter last season with a 42.6-yard average and nine boots of 50-plus yards on 33 attempts. Placekicker Paulie Fricano was also consistent; he was 15-of-21 on field goals with a long of 46 yards. Blake Banham will probably get the first crack on both punt and kickoff returns.

FINAL ANALYSIS After the Eagles qualified for their second bowl game in program history in 2016, last year could be considered a disappointment. To add to the frustration, six of the Eagles' seven losses came by seven points or fewer, including a five-point defeat at Toledo and a three-point defeat at Northern Illinois.

There are plenty of reasons for optimism this year with so much back in the fold on defense and on the offensive line, but the name of the game in football is quarterback play, and there is a serious question mark there. It's hard to imagine anyone living up to the standard set by Roback. If Eastern Michigan is to win more games than it loses this season, it will be due a running game that controls the clock and a defense that limits big plays.

It won't be long before EMU figures out where it stands in the MAC as it opens league play at home against Northern Illinois, travels to Western Michigan and is back home versus Toledo in the first three weeks of the conference season.



IAN ERIKSEN

"Chris Creighton is doing one of the best jobs we've ever seen in FBS, but it's such a hard to place to create talented signing classes year after year."

— An opposing MAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	87	Mathew Sexton (Jr.)		Arthur Jackson (Jr.)
WR		Michael Thompson (Jr.)	16	Lemar Harris (Sr.)
WR	11	Isaac Holder (Jr.)	18	Keyan Marshall (So.)
LT	**77**	**Chris Bukoski (Sr.)**	54	Ka'John Armstrong (Sr.)
LG	**67**	**Jeremy Hickey (Sr.)**	69	Jake Donnellon (So.)
C	**78**	**Dakota Tallman (Sr.)**	64	Thomas Major III (Jr.)
RG	**56**	**Jimmy Leatiota (Sr.)**	60	Mike Van Hoeven (So.)
RT	**74**	**Steve Nielsen (Jr.)**	79	Pete Bergman (Jr.)
TE	88	Bryce Kemp (Jr.)	85	Thomas Odukoya (Jr.)
QB	12	Tyler Wiegers (Sr.)	7	Isaac Stiebeling (So.)
RB	**25**	**Ian Eriksen (Sr.)**	5	Shaq Vann (Sr.)

DEFENSE (7)

DE	**92**	**Maxx Crosby (Jr.)**	91	Clay Holford (Jr.)
DT	97	Kwanii Figueroa (Sr.)	98	Chris Hendricks (Sr.)
NT	52	Desmond Kelly (Jr.)	96	Tyler LaBarbera (Sr.)
DE	**90**	**Jeremiah Harris (Sr.)**	95	Shawn Simeon (Jr.)
LB	51	Kyle Rachwal (Sr.)	45	Kobie Beltram (Jr.)
LB	6	Jaylen Pickett (Sr.)	42	Tyrone Neal (Jr.)
CB	**14**	**Ross Williams (Sr.)**	35	Freddie McGee (Fr.)
CB	**13**	**Justin Moody (Sr.)**	1	Jalen Phelps Jr.)
CB	7	Ikie Calderon (Sr.)	**4**	**Kevin McGill (Jr.)**
SS	**10**	**Vince Calhoun (Jr.)**	12	Jeff Hubbard (So.)
FS	**24**	**Brody Hoying (Jr.)**	29	Kymani Brown (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	18	Paulie Fricano (Jr.)	**KR**	20	Blake Banham (Sr.)
P	31	Jake Julien (So.)	**PR**	20	Blake Banham (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Isaac Holder, 3-3-106-0, 1 TD
Rushing: Ian Eriksen, 179 att., 810 yds., 8 TDs
Receiving: Mathew Sexton, 26 rec., 357 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Vince Calhoun, 78; Brody Hoying, 78
Sacks: Maxx Crosby, 11.0
Interceptions: Brody Hoying, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Chris Creighton
Record at School: 15-34 (4 years)
Career Record: 155-80 (21 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Aaron Keen
Defensive Coordinator: Neal Neathery
Ypsilanti, MI • Rynearson Stadium (30,200)

Courtesy of Steve King/EMUEaglesPhoto.com

Northern Illinois **Huskies**

National Forecast: **74** • MAC West Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **7-6, 7-1 MAC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at Iowa
Sept.	8	Utah
Sept.	15	Central Michigan
Sept.	22	at Florida State
Sept.	29	at Eastern Michigan
Oct.	6	at Ball State
Oct.	13	Ohio
Oct.	27	at BYU
Nov.	1	at Akron
Nov.	7	Toledo
Nov.	14	Miami (Ohio)
Nov.	20	at Western Michigan

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 6-2 MAC

Sept.	1	Boston College	L	20-23
Sept.	9	Eastern Illinois	W	38-10
Sept.	16	at Nebraska	W	21-17
Sept.	30	at San Diego State	L	28-34
Oct.	7	Kent State	W	24-3
Oct.	14	at Buffalo	W	14-13
Oct.	21	at Bowling Green	W	48-17
Oct.	26	Eastern Michigan (ot)	W	30-27
Nov.	2	at Toledo	L	17-27
Nov.	9	Ball State	W	63-17
Nov.	15	Western Michigan	W	35-31
Nov.	24	at Central Michigan	L	24-31
Dec.	26	vs. Duke #	L	14-36

#Quick Lane Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Charles Robinson, ATH, Aurora, IL
2. Marques Cox, OT, Peoria, IL
3. Justin Hall, RB, Homewood, IL
4. Joe Bonds, OLB, Chicago, IL
5. Mike DeHaan, TE, Tinley Park, IL
6. Antwain Walker, CB, Oswego, IL
7. Devin Haney, CB, Kansas City, MO
8. Reggie Jennings, OLB, Milwaukee, WI
9. Amir Brummett, WR, Decatur, IL
10. Jyran Mitchell, WR, Matteson, IL

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	28.9 ppg	4	60
Rushing	177.8 ypg	4	48
Passing	199.9 ypg	8	86
Total	377.8 ypg	9	93
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	22.0 ppg	1	32
Rushing	120.0 ypg	2	16
Passing	218.5 ypg	7	57
Total	338.5 ypg	1	26
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
-2	-0.15	8	81

STAT CORNER

30

NIU opponents gained at least 5.0 yards on 30% of their carries, the third-lowest rate in the country behind Ohio State and TCU.

OFFENSE Part of the Huskies' recent three-year downward trend is based on an abundance of injuries at quarterback, including last year, when Ryan Graham suffered a season-ending elbow injury in the regular-season opener. Daniel Santacaterina started the next three games but was ineffective. Marcus Childers, the 2017 MAC Freshman of the Year, finally helped stabilize the offense with his running and steady passing. His ability not to force passes — 16 touchdowns and five interceptions — and his skill at running the ball (473 yards rushing) are hopeful signs for the future. Childers, though, has to take his game to the next level and play more aggressively.

All five starters on the offensive line return, led by two-time first-team All-MAC selection Max Scharping at left tackle. In all, eight starters return on an offense that averaged 28.9 points and 377.8 yards per game last season. Running backs Marcus Jones and Tre Harbison are set for bigger roles.

The wide receivers group is a bit of a concern, but Spencer Tears and D.J. Brown both exceeded 40 receptions last season. Brown had a solid spring and could be in store for big numbers. Senior Jauan Wesley might be the X-factor.

Tight end remains a tight battle following the graduation of All-MAC performer Shane Wimann.

DEFENSE The NIU defense was the most dominant unit last season in a conference known primarily for highlight-reel offenses. Despite upheaval at quarterback that led to spotty play on offense, the Huskies' defense performed at a high level on a weekly basis. Most of the starters return from a unit that ranked 26th nationally in total defense and tied for 32nd in scoring defense.

Defensive end Sutton Smith was a breakout star, registering 14 sacks among his 29.5 tackles for a loss to earn MAC Defensive Player of the Year and All-America honors. Smith, a junior, headlines a defense with six returning starters. The entire front four is back for a defense with high expectations in 2018.

Junior linebacker Kyle Pugh is healthy after playing only four games last season. Junior Antonio Jones-Davis is a possible all-conference selection at another linebacker spot.

Jalen Embry and Albert Smalls comprise one of the top corner duos in the conference, and junior safeties Mykelti Williams and Trayshon Foster are both set for big seasons.

SPECIALISTS The Huskies welcome a new placekicker in Cincinnati transfer Andrew Gantz. Punter Matt Ference is back following an up-and-down freshman season in which he ranked 68th in the nation with a 41.2-yard average. Four players are vying for the open punt and kickoff return spots.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Huskies have not won more than eight games in any of the last three seasons, and although the talent level, especially on defense, would indicate a possible 10-plus-win team, the schedule is a big obstacle. The good news is that the Huskies possess significant talent on both sides of the ball, enabling them to make a run at the West Division title. They are stacked on defense, have quality depth at quarterback and host Ohio, Toledo and Miami (Ohio). Whether the Huskies can overcome the lumps — and possible resulting injuries — of playing a stacked schedule is the biggest concern.



MARCUS CHILDERS

"They've got a defense that can play above the talent level you associate with this conference — hard and fast, with kids who change the pace of a game."

— An opposing MAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)

WR	14	**Spencer Tears (Jr.)**	18	Cole Tucker (Fr.)
WR	10	**D.J. Brown (Sr.)**	28	Jordan Nettles (Fr.)
WR	9	Jauan Wesley (Sr.)	83	Dennis Robinson (Fr.)
LT	73	**Max Scharping (Sr.)**	71	Isaac Hawn (So.)
LG	61	Benn Olson (So.)	58	Brayden Patton (So.)
C	64	**Luke Shively (Sr.)**	62	C.J. Perez (Jr.)
RG	65	**Nathan Veloz (Jr.)**	76	Dale Brown (Sr.)
RT	72	**Jordan Steckler (Jr.)**	56	**Ryan Roberts (Jr.)**
TE	89	Mitchell Brinkman (Jr.)	84	Ty Harmston (Sr.)
QB	15	**Marcus Childers (So.)**	17	Ryan Graham (Sr.)
RB	21	Marcus Jones (Jr.)	22	Tre Harbison (So.)

DEFENSE (6)

DE	15	**Sutton Smith (Jr.)**	40	Drequan Brown (Sr.)
DT	99	**Ben LeRoy (Jr.)**	98	**Jack Heflin (So.)**
NG	55	Weston Kramer (So.)	94	Devin Webster (Sr.)
DE	12	**Josh Corcoran (Sr.)**	53	Quintin Wynne (Jr.)
OLB	48	Antonio Jones-Davis (Jr.)	33	Danny Walker (Fr.)
MLB	57	Kyle Pugh (Jr.)	46	Rayshawn Gay (Fr.)
OLB	37	Lance Deveaux Jr. (Jr.)	45	Jordan Cole (Fr.)
CB	3	Jalen Embry (Sr.)	30	Tifonte Hunt (Sr.)
CB	1	**Albert Smalls (Sr.)**	26	Antwain Walker (Fr.)
S	8	**Mykelti Williams (Jr.)**	29	Adam Buirge (Jr.)
S	11	Trayshon Foster (Jr.)	24	Trequan Smith (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	13	Andrew Gantz (Sr.)	KR	10	D.J. Brown (Sr.)
P	36	Matt Ference (So.)	PR	30	Tiftone Hunt (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Marcus Childers, 265-152-1,674-5, 16 TDs
Rushing: Marcus Childers, 143 att., 473 yds., 5 TDs
Receiving: Spencer Tears, 43 rec., 528 yds., 4 TDs
Tackles: Jawuan Johnson, 98
Sacks: Sutton Smith, 14.0
Interceptions: Jawuan Johnson, 5

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Rod Carey
Record at School: 44-24 (5+ years)
Career Record: 44-24 (5+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Mike Uremovich
Defensive Coordinator: Jeff Knowles
DeKalb, IL • Huskie Stadium (23,595)

NIU Athletics

Toledo **Rockets**

National Forecast: **80** • MAC West Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **8-4, 6-2 MAC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	VMI
Sept.	15	Miami (Fla.)
Sept.	22	Nevada
Sept.	29	at Fresno State
Oct.	6	Bowling Green
Oct.	13	at Eastern Michigan
Oct.	20	Buffalo
Oct.	25	at Western Michigan
Oct.	31	Ball State
Nov.	7	at Northern Illinois
Nov.	15	at Kent State
Nov.	23	Central Michigan

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 11-3, 7-1 MAC

Aug.	31	Elon	W	47-13
Sept.	9	at Nevada	W	37-24
Sept.	16	Tulsa	W	54-51
Sept.	23	at Miami	L	30-52
Oct.	7	Eastern Michigan	W	20-15
Oct.	14	at Central Michigan	W	30-10
Oct.	21	Akron	W	48-21
Oct.	26	at Ball State	W	58-17
Nov.	2	Northern Illinois	W	27-17
Nov.	8	at Ohio	L	10-38
Nov.	15	at Bowling Green	W	66-37
Nov.	24	Western Michigan	W	37-10
Dec.	2	vs. Akron #	W	45-28
Dec.	23	vs. Appalachian State %L		0-34

#Detroit %Dollar General Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Jalynn Williams, ATH, Saint Petersburg, FL
2. Carter Bradley, QB, Jacksonville, FL
3. Derrius Mullins, OT, Columbus, OH
4. Jalin Cooper, WR, Medina, NY
5. Lavel Dumont, OT, Tampa, FL
6. Sam Baker, OG, Saint Petersburg, FL
7. Daniel Bolden, ILB, Cincinnati, OH
8. D'Andre Ragin, OLB, Opa Locka, FL
9. Evander Craft, OLB, St. Francis, WI
10. Terrance Taylor, OLB, Chicago, IL

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	36.4 ppg	2	16
Rushing	204.0 ypg	3	29
Passing	279.9 ypg	2	26
Total	483.9 ypg	1	14
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	26.2 ppg	6	61
Rushing	177.9 ypg	6	82
Passing	207.1 ypg	6	43
Total	385.0 ypg	7	59
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
+1	+0.07	4	63

STAT CORNER

7.59

Toledo's offense averaged 7.59 yards per play on first downs, fifth in FBS and 0.46 yards ahead of Ohio for first in the MAC.

OFFENSE The Rockets won the 2017 MAC championship with an overpowering offense led by senior quarterback and MAC Player of the Year Logan Woodside. The NFL-bound signal caller threw an astounding 73 TDs in his final two seasons, second only to Baker Mayfield (83) during that span.

Toledo looks for a new leader for a still-potent attack that features one of the most productive receiving corps in the nation. Seniors Cody Thompson, who missed much of 2017 with an injury, and Jon'Vea Johnson along with junior Diontae Johnson, should post gaudy stats once again. Thompson had 1,269 yards and 11 touchdowns in his last full season. Jon'Vea Johnson has caught 82 passes for over 1,400 yards the past two seasons, and Diontae Johnson had 74 receptions for 1,278 yards and 13 touchdowns in 2017.

Who is lucky enough to throw to this talented trio? Junior Mitchell Guadagni is battling sophomore Eli Peters for the quarterback job, but experience is sorely lacking (a combined one career completion).

Sophomore Shakif Seymour and junior Art Thompkins combined for 1,331 yards rushing while splitting carries behind 1,300-yard rusher Terry Swanson. They should both take on a larger part of the offense in 2018.

The offensive line lost some talent, so junior Bryce Harris and seniors Yazeed Atariwa and Sami Kassem will be called on to use their significant experience to help rebuild the unit.

DEFENSE Toledo ranked seventh in the conference in defense in 2017, allowing 385.0 yards and 26.2 points per game. Good but not great — but it didn't matter, because the Rockets were able to outscore almost everyone on their schedule. With a new QB this season, the defense might have to play a bigger role.

The strength is in the secondary, where cornerback Ka'dar Hollman and safeties Josh Teachey and Kahlil Robinson all return as starters. They led a group that was third in the MAC with 15 interceptions.

Junior tackle Nate Childress anchors the line after making 10 starts in 2017. Ends Willie Ross and Tuzar Skipper, both veterans, cover the outside.

Senior linebacker Tyler Taafe has made 27 straight starts and registered 118 tackles over the past two seasons. He will lead that group along with senior Richard Olekanma, who had 45 stops in a key backup role last season. Sophomore Tre'Shun Wilson and junior Jordan Fisher add some depth to the group.

SPECIALISTS Senior Jameson Vest is a first-team All-MAC pick who hit 25-of-30 field goals last season, with five from beyond 40 yards. Sophomore Bailey Flint returns at punter. Diontae Johnson and Danzel McKinley-Lewis give Toledo the league's top return tandem.

FINAL ANALYSIS For all of the success Toledo has enjoyed in recent years, Jason Candle's 2017 Rockets accomplished something that had not been done at the school since 2004 — win a MAC championship. The Rockets possess all of the necessary ingredients to be the first team in the league to repeat since 2012 — with one huge question mark, the all-important quarterback position. If either Guadagni or Peters emerges as a viable replacement for Woodside, then it's all systems go. But if the offense struggles a bit, the defense will have to do its part. And that defense will be tested early with non-conference dates against Miami (Fla.), Nevada and Fresno State. The Rockets do catch a break in league play by not having to face either Ohio or Miami, the two favorites in the East.



DIONTAE JOHNSON

"How they replace (QB Logan) Woodside will determine if they can win another conference championship. They have the most raw talent in the league."

— An opposing MAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)					
WR	25	**Cody Thompson (Sr.)**	8	Andrew Davis (Sr.)	
WR	3	**Diontae Johnson (Jr.)**	4	**Danzel McKinley-Lewis (Jr.)**	
WR	7	**Jon'Vea Johnson (Sr.)**	10	Desmond Phillips (Jr.)	
LT	78	Yazeed Atariwa (Sr.)	71	Brock Ruble (Sr.)	
LG	67	Sami Kassem (Sr.)	62	Jordan Fair (Jr.)	
C	72	**Bryce Harris (Jr.)**	70	Roderick Peterson (Sr.)	
RG	65	Luke Doerger (So.)	56	Chandler Cotterman (Jr.)	
RT	57	Brandon Heidecker (Jr.)	58	Cameron Bell (Jr.)	
TE	14	Reggie Gilliam (Jr.)	89	Drew Rosi (So.)	
QB	6	Mitchell Guadagni (Jr.)	12	Eli Peters (So.)	
RB	33	Art Thompkins (Jr.)	21	Shakif Seymour (So.)	
DEFENSE (6)					
DE	95	Willie Ross (Jr.)	46	Andrew Boczar (Jr.)	
DT	98	Tyrone Chambers (So.)	94	Edrick Mathews (So.)	
DT	93	**Nate Childress (Jr.)**	96	David Hood (So.)	
DE	99	Tuzar Skipper (Sr.)	97	Reggie Howard (Sr.)	
LB	17	**Tyler Taafe (Sr.)**	40	Tre'Shun Wilson (So.)	
LB	42	Richard Olekanma (Sr.)	85	Jordan Fisher (Jr.)	
STAR	21	**DeDarallo Blue (Jr.)**	28	Victor Williams (So.)	
CB	24	Justin Clark (So.)	11	Marcus Whitfield (Sr.)	
CB	13	**Ka'dar Hollman (Sr.)**	5	Ronnie Jones (Jr.)	
S	27	**Kahlil Robinson (Jr.)**	34	Jordan Williams (Jr.)	
S	8	**Josh Teachey (Sr.)**	15	Tycen Anderson (So.)	
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K	37	Jameson Vest (Sr.)	**KR**	3	Diontae Johnson (Jr.)
P	49	Bailey Flint (So.)	**PR**	4	D. McKinley-Lewis (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Mitchell Guadagni, 6-1-16-1, 0 TDs
Rushing: Shakif Seymour, 116 att., 702 yds., 12 TDs
Receiving: Diontae Johnson, 74 rec., 1,278 yds., 13 TDs
Tackles: Kahlil Robinson, 67
Sacks: DeDarallo Blue, 2.0; Willie Ross Jr., 2.0
Interceptions: Kahlil Robinson, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Jason Candle
Record at School: 21-7 (2+ years)
Career Record: 21-7 (2+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Brian Wright
Defensive Coordinator: Brian George
Toledo, OH • Glass Bowl (26,248)

The University of Toledo

Western Michigan **Broncos**

National Forecast: **93** • MAC West Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **6-6, 4-4 MAC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	Syracuse
Sept.	8	at Michigan
Sept.	15	Delaware State
Sept.	22	at Georgia State
Sept.	29	at Miami (Ohio)
Oct.	6	Eastern Michigan
Oct.	13	at Bowling Green
Oct.	20	at Central Michigan
Oct.	25	Toledo
Nov.	1	Ohio
Nov.	13	at Ball State
Nov.	20	Northern Illinois

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 6-6, 4-4 MAC

Sept.	2	at USC	L	31-49
Sept.	9	at Michigan State	L	14-28
Sept.	16	Idaho	W	37-28
Sept.	23	Wagner	W	49-14
Sept.	30	Ball State	W	55-3
Oct.	7	at Buffalo (ot)	W	71-68
Oct.	15	Akron	L	13-14
Oct.	21	at Eastern Mich. (ot)	W	20-17
Nov.	1	Central Michigan	L	28-35
Nov.	8	Kent State	W	48-20
Nov.	15	at Northern Illinois	L	31-35
Nov.	24	at Toledo	L	10-37

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. A.J. Reed, OT, Muskegon, MI
2. Kaleb Eleby, QB, Maryland Heights, MO
3. DaShon Bussell, WR, Knoxville, TN
4. Anthony Torres, TE, Mishawaka, IN
5. Patrick Lupro, CB, Belleville, MI
6. Wyatt Rector, QB, Leesburg, FL
7. Chase Brown, RB, Bradenton, FL
8. Keni-H Lovely, CB, Delray Beach, FL
9. Andre Carter, DE, Detroit, MI
10. Ronnie Buford, DE, Chelsea, MI

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MAC	NATIONAL
Scoring	33.9 ppg	3	25
Rushing	224.8 ypg	2	21
Passing	164.8 ypg	11	115
Total	389.6 ypg	5	78
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	29.0 ppg	9	81
Rushing	156.1 ypg	3	53
Passing	222.4 ypg	8	62
Total	378.5 ypg	6	55
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MAC**	**NATIONAL**
+8	+0.67	2	20

STAT CORNER

+1.6

WMU's offense averaged 6.5 yards to go on third downs, while opponents averaged 8.1. This plus-1.6 margin was fifth in FBS.

OFFENSE Western Michigan's offense will have a new play caller this season — second-year head coach Tim Lester is taking the reins after Kevin Johns left to be the OC at Texas Tech. Lester is thrilled to be calling plays again. "I don't think I would have been ready [last year]," Lester says. "The first four to five months of taking over this program, there's no way I would have been ready to install an offense."

This could be a fun season to call plays for WMU's offense. The Broncos return a dozen players with starting experience, including junior quarterback Jon Wassink, who was lost for the season in Week 8 with a broken collarbone, amid a 5–3 start.

They also return two members of their heralded three-headed backfield, senior Jamauri Bogan and junior LeVante Bellamy. Bellamy is an explosive back when he's healthy. Both of his seasons at WMU have been cut short by injuries. Bogan enters the season with 2,563 career rushing yards and 27 touchdowns. He missed the end of 2017 with a foot injury.

They'll run behind an offensive line that returns four starters — including All-MAC honorees John Keenoy (center) and Luke Juriga (right guard) — though WMU must replace All-America left tackle Chukwuma Okorafor. That responsibility is likely to fall on sophomore Jaylon Moore.

WMU returns plenty of experience at receiver, led by juniors D'Wayne Eskridge (506 yards) and Keishawn Watson (41 catches). Lester moved oversized wideout Giovanni Ricci to tight end, where "he can just eat and be himself," and, WMU is hoping, be a mismatch for linebackers and safeties.

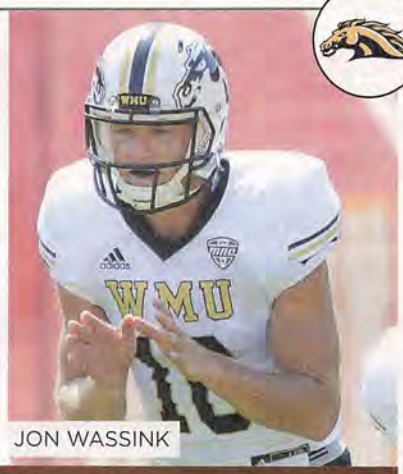
DEFENSE WMU's secondary should be among the best in the MAC, even without the electrifying play of Darius Phillips. Senior cornerback Sam Beal, the Broncos' best cover corner, elected to return for his senior year over entering the NFL Draft. Justin Tranquill, who was lost for the season with a knee injury in Week 2 last season, gives WMU a physical playmaking presence at strong safety.

WMU replaces all three starting linebackers, though Lester believes he's replacing them with "the fastest linebacking group I've had or seen," highlighted by outside backers Alex Grace and Drake Spears.

The interior defensive line is where WMU appears most vulnerable and inexperienced. "We're searching," Lester says.

SPECIALISTS WMU had maybe the oldest special teams unit in the country last year. Its punter, holder and kickoff specialist, Derrick Mitchell, was 30 years old. The Broncos might have the youngest group of specialists this year, with sophomore placekicker Josh Grant (15-of-23 field goals made in 2017) as the elder statesman. Touted true freshman Nick Mihalic is expected to take over at punter. The Broncos will miss Phillips in the return game. Watson is likely to handle punt return duties. But kick returns will be a "fun tryout in fall camp," Lester says.

FINAL ANALYSIS By the end of last season, WMU had lost a whopping 21 players to season-ending injuries, including five safeties, five running backs and five receivers. "It started getting ridiculous," Lester says. It did, however, create a good dynamic entering this season — an experienced roster, devoid of a large senior class. The Broncos have only nine seniors on a team with realistic designs on competing for a MAC championship, meaning this should be a two-year group.



JON WASSINK

"Tim Lester has done a really good job keeping the roster intact after (P.J.) Fleck left. They won't win 12, but they're going to be dangerous."

— An opposing MAC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	3	Anton Curtis (Jr.)	10	Hunter Broersma (So.)	
WR	13	**Keishawn Watson (Jr.)**	8	Tyron Arnett (So.)	
WR	7	**D'Wayne Eskridge (Jr.)**	86	Harrison Taylor (Fr.)	
LT	76	Jaylon Moore (So.)	72	Dylan Deatherage (Fr.)	
LG	67	Curtis Doyle (Sr.)	61	**Mike Caliendo (So.)**	
C	52	**John Keenoy (Sr.)**	62	Alex Keys (Jr.)	
RG	59	**Luke Juriga (Jr.)**	51	Jordan Asbury (So.)	
RT	75	**Zach Novoselsky (Sr.)**	60	Mark Brooks (So.)	
TE	38	Odell Miller (Sr.)	15	Giovanni Ricci (Jr.)	
QB	16	**Jon Wassink (Jr.)**	9	Kaleb Eleby (Fr.)	
RB	32	Jamauri Bogan (Sr.)	5	LeVante Bellamy (Jr.)	

DEFENSE (5)

DE	57	Ali Fayad (So.)	58	**Antonio Balabani (Jr.)**
DT	53	Ralph Holley (So.)	90	Ken Aguirre (So.)
DT	91	Ken Finley (Sr.)	66	Wesley French (Jr.)
DE	33	**Eric Assoua (Sr.)**	36	DeShawn Foster (Jr.)
SLB	34	Alex Grace (Jr.)	20	Drake Spears (Jr.)
MLB	23	Treshaun Hayward (So.)	56	Corvin Moment (Fr.)
WLB	20	Drake Spears (Jr.)	7	Najee Clayton (Jr.)
CB	12	Emanuel Jackson (So.)	24	Obbie Jackson (Jr.)
CB	1	**Sam Beal (Sr.)**	19	Keni-H Lovely (Fr.)
SS	2	**Justin Tranquill (Jr.)**	9	Davontae Ginwright (Jr.)
FS	21	**Stefan Claiborne (Jr.)**	17	A.J. Thomas (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	37	Josh Grant (So.)	KR	23	Ra'Sean Davie (So.)
P	19	Nick Mihalic (Fr.)	PR	13	Keishawn Watson (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Jon Wassink, 193-124-1,411-4, 14 TDs
Rushing: Jamauri Bogan, 112 att., 589 yds., 3 TDs
Receiving: Keishawn Watson, 41 rec., 374 yds., 7 TDs
Tackles: Stefan Claiborne, 64
Sacks: Antonio Balabani, 4.0
Interceptions: Sam Beal, 2; Obbie Jackson, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Tim Lester
Record at School: 6-6 (1 year)
Career Record: 46-29 (7 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Jake Moreland
Defensive Coordinators: Tim Daoust, Lou Esposito
Kalamazoo, MI • Waldo Stadium (30,200)

Gary Shook / WMU Athletics

MOUNTAIN WEST PREVIEW

Mountain — Predicted Order of Finish — West



1 BOISE STATE **BRONCOS**
11-2, 7-1 MW



2 UTAH STATE **AGGIES**
8-4, 5-3 MW



3 WYOMING **COWBOYS**
7-5, 5-3 MW



4 COLORADO STATE **RAMS**
6-6, 5-3 MW



5 AIR FORCE **FALCONS**
5-7, 4-4 MW



6 NEW MEXICO **LOBOS**
3-9, 1-7 MW

1 SAN DIEGO STATE **AZTECS**
8-5, 6-2 MW



2 FRESNO STATE **BULLDOGS**
8-4, 6-2 MW



3 UNLV **REBELS**
6-6, 4-4 MW



4 NEVADA **WOLF PACK**
5-7, 4-4 MW



5 HAWAII **RAINBOW WARRIORS**
3-10, 1-7 MW



6 SAN JOSE STATE **SPARTANS**
1-11, 0-8 MW



Mountain West Championship: **Boise State over San Diego State**

GAMES TO WATCH

AUG. 25
HAWAII AT COLORADO STATE
The Mountain West is once again prominently featured in Week 0 as Colorado State hosts Hawaii in the first league game of the 2018 slate.

AUG. 31
SAN DIEGO STATE AT STANFORD
The Aztecs have won three straight games against Pac-12 opponents, including a 20–17 decision last September against Stanford in San Diego.

AUG. 31
COLORADO STATE VS. COLORADO
The Rams have lost three straight in this neutral-site rivalry game and have scored a combined 10 points in the last two. That needs to change.

SEPT. 15
FRESNO STATE AT UCLA
The Bulldogs, who play Minnesota the week before, have lost nine straight games against Power 5 opponents dating back to the 2013 season.

SEPT. 29
BOISE STATE AT WYOMING
The Josh Allen-less Cowboys have an opportunity to make an early-season statement when Boise State rolls into town.

OCT. 6
NAVY AT AIR FORCE
The Falcons went 0–2 against the service academies in 2017 after winning the Commander-in-Chief's Trophy the previous season.

New Mexico, Nevada: AP; Wyoming: Troy Babbitt-UW Media-Athletics; Fresno State: Fresno State Athletics/Keith Kountz; Air Force: Steven King/Air Force Athletics; Hawaii: Harry Gaston/Hawaii Athletics; Rypien: John Kelly; San Jose: Terrell Lloyd/San Jose State Athletics; UNLV: K6 Studios/UNLV; SDSU: Ernie Anderson/SDSU Athletic Media Relations; All others courtesy of each school's athletic department

2018 Unit Rankings

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
AIR FORCE	6	10	11	10	8	12	7
BOISE STATE	1	2	3	2	1	4	1
COLORADO STATE	8	4	7	6	7	7	6
FRESNO STATE	3	6	1	4	5	1	2
HAWAII	12	12	9	11	11	6	11
NEVADA	2	5	2	8	9	8	10
NEW MEXICO	9	8	10	9	6	10	8
SAN DIEGO STATE	5	3	12	1	3	3	4
SAN JOSE STATE	11	7	4	12	12	11	12
UNLV	4	1	5	7	10	9	9
UTAH STATE	7	9	8	5	4	5	5
WYOMING	10	11	6	3	2	2	3

Recruiting by School

1. Boise State
2. San Diego State
3. Nevada
4. Colorado State
5. Fresno State
6. Hawaii
7. San Jose State
8. UNLV
9. Utah State
10. Air Force
11. Wyoming
12. New Mexico


LEXINGTON THOMAS, UNLV

2018 Bowl Projections

Fiesta Bowl: Boise State vs. Wisconsin

Las Vegas Bowl: San Diego State vs. California

Famous Idaho Potato Bowl: Fresno State vs. Buffalo

Hawaii Bowl: Utah State vs. Marshall

New Mexico Bowl: Wyoming vs. Southern Miss

Arizona Bowl: Colorado State vs. ULM


BRETT RYPIEN, BOISE STATE

MW Coordinator Carousel

Air Force: Defense
New: TBD
Old: Steve Russ

Colorado State: Offense
New: Dave Johnson
Old: Will Friend

Colorado State: Defense
New: John Jancek
Old: Marty English

Fresno State: Defense
New: Bert Watts
Old: Orlondo Steinauer

New Mexico: Offense
New: Calvin Magee
Old: Bob DeBesse

Utah State: Defense
New: Frank Maile,
Keith Patterson
Old: Frank Maile,
Kendrick Shaver

Hawaii: Defense
New: Corey Batoon
Old: Legi Suiaunoa

San Diego State: Defense
New: Zach Arnett
Old: Danny Gonzales,
Rocky Long

San Jose State: Offense
New: Kevin McGiven
Old: Andrew Sowder

UNLV: Defense
New: Tim Skipper
Old: Kent Baer

OCT. 6
SAN DIEGO STATE AT BOISE STATE
These teams have each won two division titles in the last four seasons but have yet to meet in the MW Championship Game.

OCT. 27
WYOMING AT COLORADO STATE
Only 65 miles separate these two rivals who first played in 1905. Wyoming has won two straight and six of the last nine in the series.

NOV. 3
FRESNO STATE AT UNLV
Tony Sanchez is making progress at UNLV. A win over the defending West Division champs would be a huge step forward for this program.

NOV. 10
FRESNO STATE AT BOISE STATE
These two split last year, with Fresno State winning at home in late November followed by a Boise victory the next week in the league title game.

NOV. 17
SAN DIEGO ST. AT FRESNO ST.
It would not be a surprise if this game decided the West Division title. Fresno State thumped the Aztecs in San Diego last season.

NOV. 24
NEVADA AT UNLV
This rivalry is rarely (if ever) relevant nationally but often offers a nice barometer for both programs. Nevada has won two straight.


MARCUS MCMARYION, FRESNO STATE

MW Returning Leaders

Passing	ATT	COMP	PCT	YDS	TD	INT	AVG/G
Ty Gangi, Nevada	374	228	61.0	2,746	25	11	249.6
Brett Rypien, Boise State	348	218	62.6	2,877	16	6	221.3
Marcus McMaryion, Fresno State	351	218	62.1	2,726	14	5	194.7

Rushing	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Lexington Thomas, UNLV	211	1,336	6.3	17	62	111.3
Arion Worthman, Air Force	217	821	3.8	13	52	82.1
Armani Rogers, UNLV	146	780	5.3	8	83	78.0

Receiving	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
KeeSean Johnson, Fresno State	77	1,013	13.2	8	81	72.4
McLane Mannix, Nevada	57	778	13.7	6	75	64.8
Brendan O'Leary-Orange, Nevada	39	618	15.9	4	55	56.2

Tackles: Frank Ginda, San Jose State (173); Jeffrey Allison, Fresno State (126)
Sacks: Curtis Weaver, Boise State (11); Carl Granderson, Wyoming (8.5)
Interceptions: Tariq Thompson, San Diego State (5), Andrew Wingard, Wyoming (5)

2017 MW Standings

MOUNTAIN	MW	OVERALL	WEST	MW	OVERALL
Boise State	7-1	11-3	Fresno State	7-1	10-4
Wyoming	5-3	8-5	San Diego State	6-2	10-3
Colorado State	5-3	7-6	UNLV	4-4	5-7
Air Force	4-4	5-7	Nevada	3-5	3-9
Utah State	4-4	6-7	Hawaii	1-7	3-9
New Mexico	1-7	3-9	San Jose State	1-7	2-11

2017 Bowl Results

Las Vegas Bowl: Boise State 38, Oregon 28

New Mexico Bowl: Marshall 31, Colorado State 28

Famous Idaho Potato Bowl: Wyoming 37, Central Michigan 14

Armed Forces Bowl: Army 42, San Diego State 35

Hawaii Bowl: Fresno State 33, Houston 27

Arizona Bowl: New Mexico State 26, Utah State 20 (ot)

2017 MW TEAM STATS & RANKINGS

OFFENSE

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
AIR FORCE	31.4 (3)	307.4 (1)	110.1 (12)	417.5 (3)
BOISE STATE	32.5 (2)	143.5 (9)	262.6 (3)	406.1 (4)
COLORADO STATE	33.4 (1)	200.2 (5)	292.2 (1)	492.5 (1)
FRESNO STATE	27.1 (8)	155.0 (8)	237.9 (4)	392.9 (9)
HAWAII	22.8 (10)	168.2 (7)	234.5 (5)	402.7 (5)
NEVADA	28.2 (7)	127.2 (10)	270.4 (2)	397.6 (7)
NEW MEXICO	20.7 (11)	235.4 (4)	124.1 (11)	359.5 (10)
SAN DIEGO STATE	30.8 (4)	252.5 (2)	147.7 (10)	400.2 (6)
SAN JOSE STATE	15.8 (12)	120.1 (11)	198.0 (7)	318.1 (11)
UNLV	28.8 (6)	240.2 (3)	186.9 (8)	427.1 (2)
UTAH STATE	30.2 (5)	171.4 (6)	226.0 (6)	397.4 (8)
WYOMING	23.5 (9)	108.8 (12)	177.2 (9)	286.0 (12)

DEFENSE

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
AIR FORCE	32.4 (9)	222.8 (10)	171.1 (1)	393.9 (5)
BOISE STATE	22.9 (4)	120.2 (2)	212.4 (6)	332.6 (3)
COLORADO STATE	27.8 (6)	187.1 (6)	244.5 (10)	431.6 (8)
FRESNO STATE	17.9 (2)	113.4 (1)	207.1 (5)	320.6 (2)
HAWAII	33.9 (T10)	210.2 (8)	248.6 (11)	458.8 (10)
NEVADA	33.9 (T10)	208.3 (7)	263.1 (12)	471.3 (11)
NEW MEXICO	31.8 (8)	157.4 (4)	240.6 (9)	398.0 (6)
SAN DIEGO STATE	20.2 (3)	136.2 (3)	178.7 (3)	314.8 (1)
SAN JOSE STATE	41.7 (12)	285.4 (12)	213.9 (7)	499.3 (12)
UNLV	31.8 (7)	239.3 (11)	219.3 (8)	458.7 (9)
UTAH STATE	26.9 (5)	216.4 (9)	182.5 (4)	398.8 (7)
WYOMING	17.5 (1)	160.3 (5)	174.9 (2)	335.2 (4)

ALL-MW TEAM

First-Team Offense

QB	**Brett Rypien**	6-3	203	Sr.	Boise State
RB	**Lexington Thomas**	5-9	170	Sr.	UNLV
RB	**Juwan Washington**	5-7	190	Jr.	San Diego State
AP	**Alexander Mattison**	5-11	219	Jr.	Boise State
WR	**KeeSean Johnson**	6-2	198	Sr.	Fresno State
WR	**McLane Mannix**	5-10	175	So.	Nevada
TE	**Dax Raymond**	6-5	245	Jr.	Utah State
C	**Quin Ficklin**	6-2	290	Sr.	Utah State
OL	**Ezra Cleveland**	6-6	310	So.	Boise State
OL	**Keith Ismael**	6-3	310	So.	San Diego State
OL	**Aaron Jenkins**	6-2	307	Sr.	New Mexico
OL	**Tyler Roemer**	6-7	305	So.	San Diego State



JUWAN WASHINGTON, SAN DIEGO STATE



MALIK REED, NEVADA

First-Team Defense

DL	**Youhanna Ghaifan**	6-4	290	Jr.	Wyoming
DL	**Carl Granderson**	6-5	261	Sr.	Wyoming
DL	**David Moa**	6-3	279	Sr.	Boise State
DL	**Curtis Weaver**	6-3	266	So.	Boise State
LB	**Jeffrey Allison**	6-0	250	Jr.	Fresno State
LB	**Malik Reed**	6-1	250	Sr.	Nevada
LB	**Logan Wilson**	6-4	240	Jr.	Wyoming
CB	**Jaron Bryant**	6-1	176	Jr.	Fresno State
CB	**Tyler Horton**	5-11	185	Sr.	Boise State
S	**Kekoa Nawahine**	6-2	205	Jr.	Boise State
S	**Andrew Wingard**	6-0	210	Sr.	Wyoming

First-Team Specialists

K	**Dominik Eberle**	6-2	190	Jr.	Utah State
P	**Ryan Stonehouse**	5-11	170	So.	Colorado State
KR	**Tyler Hall**	5-10	190	Jr.	Wyoming
PR	**Avery Williams**	5-9	193	So.	Boise State

SECOND-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Ty Gangi**	6-2	210	Sr.	Nevada
RB	**Izzy Matthews**	6-0	220	Sr.	Colorado State
RB	**Kelton Moore**	5-10	220	Jr.	Nevada
AP	**John Ursua**	5-10	175	Jr.	Hawaii
WR	**A.J. Richardson**	6-0	213	Sr.	Boise State
WR	**Ron'quavion Tarver**	6-3	215	Sr.	Utah State
TE	**Josh Oliver**	6-5	253	Sr.	San Jose State
C	**Micah St. Andrew**	6-3	343	Sr.	Fresno State
OL	**Nathan Jacobson**	6-5	280	Sr.	UNLV
OL	**Sean Krepsz**	6-5	325	Sr.	Nevada
OL	**Netane Muti**	6-3	310	So.	Fresno State
OL	**Zach Wallace**	6-7	314	Sr.	Wyoming

SECOND-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Jabril Frazier**	6-4	236	Sr.	Boise State
DL	**Noble Hall**	6-3	265	Sr.	San Diego State
DL	**Durrant Miles**	6-5	266	Sr.	Boise State
DL	**Christopher Unga**	6-0	300	Jr.	Utah State
LB	**Ronley Lakalaka**	6-0	225	Sr.	San Diego State
LB	**Tyson Maeva**	6-0	228	Jr.	Boise State
LB	**Jahlani Tavai**	6-4	245	Sr.	Hawaii
CB	**Ron Smith**	6-0	170	Jr.	San Diego State
CB	**Avery Williams**	5-9	193	So.	Boise State
S	**Dameon Baber**	5-10	205	Sr.	Nevada
S	**Tariq Thompson**	6-0	190	So.	San Diego State

SECOND-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Wyatt Bryan**	6-1	175	Sr.	Colorado State
P	**Aaron Dalton**	6-4	220	Sr.	Utah State
KR	**Juwan Washington**	5-7	190	Jr.	San Diego State
PR	**Austin Conway**	5-10	183	Jr.	Wyoming


Izzy Matthews
Colorado State


Tyler Nevens
San Jose State


Dameon Baber
Nevada


Austin Conway
Wyoming

THIRD-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Marcus McMaryion**	6-2	203	Sr.	Fresno State
RB	**Tyler Nevens**	6-0	218	So.	San Jose State
RB	**Tyrone Owens**	5-9	187	Sr.	New Mexico
AP	**Ronald Cleveland**	5-9	174	Sr.	Air Force
WR	**Olabisi Johnson**	6-0	195	Sr.	Colorado State
WR	**Brendan O'Leary-Orange**	6-4	210	Jr.	Nevada
TE	**Kahale Warring**	6-6	250	Jr.	San Diego State
C	**Asotui Eli**	6-4	285	Sr.	Hawaii
OL	**Roman Andrus**	6-4	300	Sr.	Utah State
OL	**Kaden Jackson**	6-2	299	Sr.	Wyoming
OL	**Colby Meeks**	6-3	310	Sr.	Colorado State
OL	**John Molchon**	6-5	314	Jr.	Boise State

THIRD-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Sonatane Lui**	6-1	316	Jr.	Boise State
DL	**Emmanuel Jones**	6-4	245	So.	Colorado State
DL	**Cody Baker**	6-3	274	Sr.	New Mexico
DL	**Bryson Bridges**	6-2	291	Sr.	San Jose State
LB	**George Helmuth**	6-1	225	Sr.	Fresno State
LB	**Suli Tamaivena**	6-0	230	Sr.	Utah State
LB	**Josh Watson**	6-2	240	Sr.	Colorado State
CB	**Rojesterman Farris**	6-1	180	Jr.	Hawaii
CB	**Jericho Flowers**	5-10	175	Jr.	UNLV
S	**Gaje Ferguson**	6-0	205	Sr.	Utah State
S	**Asauni Rufus**	5-11	190	Sr.	Nevada

THIRD-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Bryce Crawford**	6-3	223	Sr.	San Jose State
P	**Blake Cusick**	6-2	190	Jr.	Fresno State
KR	**Elijah Lilly**	5-10	152	Jr.	New Mexico
PR	**Jordan Nathan**	5-8	180	So.	Utah State

Reed, Matthews, Nevens, Baber, Conway: AP; McMaryion: Keith Kountz/Fresno State Athletics; Washington: Ernie Anderson/SDSU Athletic Media Relations

Air Force Falcons

National Forecast: **101** • MW Mountain Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **5-7, 4-4 MW**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Stony Brook
Sept.	8	at Florida Atlantic
Sept.	22	at Utah State
Sept.	29	Nevada
Oct.	6	Navy
Oct.	13	at San Diego State
Oct.	20	at UNLV
Oct.	27	Boise State
Nov.	3	at Army
Nov.	10	New Mexico
Nov.	17	at Wyoming
Nov.	24	Colorado State

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 4-4 MW

Sept.	2	VMI	W	62-0
Sept.	16	at Michigan	L	13-29
Sept.	23	San Diego State	L	24-28
Sept.	30	at New Mexico	L	38-56
Oct.	7	at Navy	L	45-48
Oct.	14	UNLV	W	34-30
Oct.	20	at Nevada	W	45-42
Oct.	28	at Colorado State	W	45-28
Nov.	4	Army	L	0-21
Nov.	11	Wyoming	L	14-28
Nov.	18	at Boise State	L	19-44
Nov.	25	Utah State	W	38-35

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Chris Kane, TE, San Clemente, CA
2. Kamakani Crosby, DT, Newbury Park, CA
3. Malik Rodgers, WR, Pearland, TX
4. Jaylen Jones, S, Houston, TX
5. Tim McClendon, ILB, Ozark, AL
6. Jace Waters, OLB, Allen, TX
7. Gary Mossop Jr., S, Broken Arrow, OK
8. Max Massingale, QB, Scottsdale, AZ
9. Jace Bobo, OLB, Cypress, TX
10. Auston Deason, CB, Pearland, TX

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MW	NATIONAL
Scoring	31.4 ppg	3	44
Rushing	307.4 ypg	1	4
Passing	110.1 ypg	12	126
Total	417.5 ypg	3	49
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	32.4 ppg	9	101
Rushing	222.8 ypg	10	118
Passing	171.1 ypg	1	10
Total	393.9 ypg	5	66
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
-10	-0.83	10	120

STAT CORNER

-10

Air Force's turnover margin flipped from plus-6 in 2016 to minus-10 in 2017 — minus-1 in five wins and minus-9 in seven losses.

OFFENSE A year ago at this time, quarterback Arion Worthman looked ready to become one of the Mountain West's top offensive threats. He was dynamic as a sophomore, leading Air Force to six straight wins, but he struggled in his second season as a starter. He completed only 49.5 percent of his passes, and his yards per carry dropped from 5.2 to 3.8. All of Worthman's and Air Force's faults were on display when Army shut out the Falcons.

Worthman must improve if the Falcons hope to climb back to a winning record. His passes were more accurate in the offseason, and he says he plans to pitch the ball to fellow runners more often. During the Troy Calhoun era, which started in 2007, quarterbacks have worked more as distributors than as runners. No QB averaged than 14 carries until Worthman, who has averaged nearly 22 carries per start. His carries need to drop for the attack to thrive.

Tailback Tim McVey leaves a massive hole in the offense. A superb runner and receiver, McVey was never properly utilized. Joey Saucier emerged in the offseason as the top candidate to serve as lead running back. Tackles Griffin Landrum and Wolfgang Rehbock anchor an undersized but athletic offensive line that pushed Air Force to fourth place nationally in rushing yards in 2017.

Ronald Cleveland leads a talented group of receivers. Cleveland spent much of last season open in the secondary, but Worthman seldom found him.

DEFENSE A flimsy defensive front allowed 6.0 yards per carry, worst in the nation. Continued softness in the middle will doom the Falcons, who face the powerful rushing attacks of Florida Atlantic, San Diego State, New Mexico, Army and Navy.

Air Force must recover from the departure of defensive coordinator Steve Russ, who left for the Carolina Panthers. Russ, a former star AFA linebacker, knew how to build stingy defenses with undersized players.

End Jordan Jackson showed promise as a freshman and was dominating in offseason practices. Nose guard Mosese Fifita is the rare Falcon who flirts with 300 pounds. His development into a snarling force could give the defense more toughness against the run. Linebacker Kyle Johnson emerged as a force in the offseason and has the look of a future star.

The defensive backfield should again be solid. Runners thrashed the Falcons in 2017, but Air Force finished 10th nationally in passing yards allowed. Garrett Kauppila, out for most of 2017, is a rugged and wise strong safety, and Kyle Floyd is ideal for the Falcons' hybrid linebacker/defensive back position.

SPECIALISTS Punter Charlie Scott delivered a strong sophomore season, but Calhoun wants him to add hang time to his kicks. Cleveland is a dangerous and reliable punt returner. Jake Koehnke is the lead candidate to emerge from a mediocre collection of placekickers.

FINAL ANALYSIS Few Air Force quarterbacks have possessed Worthman's combination of power and speed, but he's still struggling to master the position. He must mature as a passer and option distributor for the offense to thrive. If he fails to mature, he could lose his job to Isaiah Sanders, who led the Falcons to victory in last season's finale against Utah State.

Someone, or a few someones, must emerge on defense to stop the run. A Sept. 8 trip to Florida Atlantic will do much to reveal the Falcons. If FAU stampedes to a big rushing day, Air Force could be destined for a repeat of last season's troubles.



ARION WORTHMAN

"The talent level there has declined somewhat. It's noticeable compared to previous years. The defense has been their weakness."

— An opposing MW assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (4)					
WR	**3**	**Ronald Cleveland (Sr.)**	**84**	Garrett Amy (Sr.)	
WR	**8**	**Marcus Bennett (Sr.)**	**7**	Geraud Sanders (Jr.)	
LT	**74**	**Griffin Landrum (Sr.)**	**61**	Scott Hattok (Jr.)	
LG	71	Garrett Watts (Jr.)	66	Nolan Laufenberg (So.)	
C	68	Chris Mitchell (Jr.)	72	Connor Vikupitz (Jr.)	
RG	76	Blake Davis (Jr.)	75	Colin Marquez (Jr.)	
RT	69	Wolfgang Rehbock (Jr.)	54	Christian Frost (Sr.)	
TE	89	Kade Waguespack (Jr.)	88	Rhett Myers (Jr.)	
QB	**2**	**Arion Worthman (Sr.)**	**5**	Isaiah Sanders (Jr.)	
TB	29	Joseph Saucier (Jr.)	9	Malik Miller (Sr.)	
FB	33	Taven Birdow (Jr.)	34	Kevin Fagan (Jr.)	
DEFENSE (6)					
DE	94	Jordan Jackson (So.)	57	Ryan Darby (Sr.)	
DE	**90**	**Micah Capra (Sr.)**	93	Danny Highland (Sr.)	
NG	**95**	**Cody Gessler (Sr.)**	99	Mosese Fifita (Jr.)	
OLB	**8**	**Lakota Wills (So.)**	45	R.J. Jackson (Sr.)	
ILB	40	Kyle Johnson (Jr.)	42	Blake Dailey (Sr.)	
ILB	49	Brody Bagnall (Sr.)	41	Price Morgan (Jr.)	
OLB	**29**	**Kyle Floyd (Sr.)**	13	Malik Dawkins (Jr.)	
CB	**27**	**Jeremy Fejedelem (Jr.)**	3	Milton Bugg (So.)	
CB	5	Dailen Sutton (Sr.)	19	Elisha Palm (So.)	
SS	22	Garrett Kauppila (Sr.)	31	Ross Connors (Sr.)	
FS	**4**	**James Jones (Jr.)**	20	Benjamin Waters (Jr.)	
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K	93	Jake Koehnke (Jr.)	**KR**	19	Nolan Eriksen (Jr.)
P	91	Charlie Scott (Jr.)	**PR**	3	Ronald Cleveland (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Arion Worthman, 109-54-1,115-4, 10 TDs
Rushing: Arion Worthman, 217 att., 831 yds., 13 TDs
Receiving: Marcus Bennett, 19 rec., 403 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: Kyle Floyd, 60
Sacks: Lakota Wills, 2.0
Interceptions: Four players tied with 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Troy Calhoun
Record at School: 82-60 (11 years)
Career Record: 82-60 (11 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Mike Thiessen
Defensive Coordinator: TBD
Colorado Springs, CO • Falcon Stadium (46,692)

Courtesy Air Force Athletics

Boise State **Broncos**

National Forecast: **19** • MW Mountain Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **11-2, 7-1 MW**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at Troy
Sept.	8	Connecticut
Sept.	15	at Oklahoma State
Sept.	29	at Wyoming
Oct.	6	San Diego State
Oct.	13	at Nevada
Oct.	19	Colorado State
Oct.	27	at Air Force
Nov.	3	BYU
Nov.	10	Fresno State
Nov.	17	at New Mexico
Nov.	24	Utah State

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 11-3, 7-1 MW

Sept.	2	Troy	W	24-13
Sept.	9	at Wash. State (ot)	L	44-47
Sept.	14	New Mexico	W	28-14
Sept.	22	Virginia	L	23-42
Oct.	6	at BYU	W	24-7
Oct.	14	at San Diego State	W	31-14
Oct.	21	Wyoming	W	24-14
Oct.	28	at Utah State	W	41-14
Nov.	4	Nevada	W	41-14
Nov.	11	at Colorado State (ot)	W	59-52
Nov.	18	Air Force	W	44-19
Nov.	25	at Fresno State	L	17-28
Dec.	2	Fresno State #	W	17-14
Dec.	16	vs. Oregon %	W	38-28

#MW Championship %Las Vegas Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Khalil Shakir, WR, Murrieta, CA
2. Tyneil Hopper, TE, Roswell, GA
3. Chris Mitchell, S, Mission Viejo, CA
4. Stefan Cobbs, WR, Keller, TX
5. Andrew VanBuren, RB, West Hills, CA
6. Kukea Emmsley, OLB, Kapolei, HI
7. Scale Igiehon, DT, Del Valle, TX
8. Tyric LeBeauf, CB, Long Beach, CA
9. Riley Smith, QB, St. Augustine, FL
10. Brandon Hawkins, OLB, Georgetown, TX

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MW	NATIONAL
Scoring	32.5 ppg	2	36
Rushing	143.5 ypg	9	91
Passing	262.6 ypg	3	37
Total	406.1 ypg	4	57
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	22.9 ppg	4	38
Rushing	120.2 ypg	2	17
Passing	212.4 ypg	6	49
Total	332.6 ypg	3	21
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
+13	+0.93	2	9

STAT CORNER

+13

BSU's turnover margin flipped from minus-9 in 2016 to plus-13 in 2017 — minus-2 in three losses and plus-15 in 11 wins.

OFFENSE Senior quarterback Brett Rypien is the active leader in the FBS in career passing yards (9,876), and after a shaky first half of the season, he was sharp down the stretch, throwing only one interception in his final eight regular-season games after tossing three in his first four games. His return is vital for a passing game that loses receiver Cedrick Wilson (school-record 1,511 yards in 2017) and tight end Jake Roh (team-high nine TD catches).

Rypien will have no shortage of options, as the team added five receivers and two tight ends in the latest recruiting class. Senior receivers A.J. Richardson and Sean Modster had 33 and 32 receptions, respectively, last season, while sophomores CT Thomas and Octavius Evans showed significant potential as true freshmen. The team's returning tight ends had four combined receptions last year.

Junior running back Alexander Mattison rushed for 1,086 yards and 12 touchdowns, extending the program's streak of seasons with a 1,000-yard rusher to nine. In a statistical anomaly, Mattison averaged 120.7 yards in true road games and only 50 yards at home.

Two starters graduate off the line, but five who made at least one start last season are back, including sophomore left tackle Ezra Cleveland, the only lineman to start all 14 games.

DEFENSE At times, the Broncos' defense was dominant in 2017, and it returns just about everyone. The one problem: The team's best player, Leighton Vander Esch, is one of the players not coming back. A recruiting afterthought when he signed in 2014, the Idaho native ended his career as the Mountain West Defensive Player of the Year. Ten of the top 11 tacklers are back, plus those responsible for 12 of the team's 15 interceptions and 30 of its 34 sacks. Boise State allowed fewer than 20 points nine times and created 26 turnovers after forcing just nine in 2016.

Senior cornerback Tyler Horton is an All-Mountain West performer, and sophomore Avery Williams has a nose for the ball. Safety is extremely deep, led by juniors Kekoa Nawahine and DeAndre Pierce, who combined for 191 tackles.

Junior middle linebacker Tyson Maeva is a smart, productive presence who is poised for an important role as the team searches for Vander Esch's replacement. There is some intriguing versatility, as nickel back Kekaula Kaniho and "Stud" end Curtis Weaver were not full-time starters as freshmen, though Kaniho scored a pair of TDs, while Weaver had 11 sacks.

All three defensive line starters return with 56 career starts among them, key parts of a rush defense that finished 17th nationally.

SPECIALISTS The Broncos took a quantum leap forward last season, improving in nearly every special teams facet, including two punt return touchdowns by Williams. Placekicker Haden Hoggarth was solid as a junior, hitting 18-of-23 field goals, and reliable punters Joel Velazquez and Quinn Skillin also return.

FINAL ANALYSIS If pass catchers can step up — and if Rypien can elevate them — it would go a long way for a team that averaged "only" 32.5 points per game, the program's lowest output since 2012. The defense and special teams return a ton of talent, so there is little reason to believe the Broncos can't make a run at a second straight Mountain West title and contend for a New Year's Six Bowl.



BRETT RYPIEN

"(Bryan) Harsin feels like as much of a 'lifer' coach as you can have. He knows that program so well, knows how to compete in the margins with the P5s."

— An opposing MW assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)					
WR	82	Octavius Evans (So.)	81	Akilian Butler (Jr.)	
WR	8	Sean Modster (Sr.)	6	CT Thomas (So.)	
WR	7	**A.J. Richardson (Sr.)**	2	Khalil Shakir (Fr.)	
LT	76	**Ezra Cleveland (So.)**	66	Isiah Moore (Jr.)	
LG	77	**John Molchon (Jr.)**	67	Garrett Larson (Jr.)	
C	67	Garrett Larson (Jr.)	71	Donte Harrington (So.)	
RG	79	**Eric Quevedo (Jr.)**	66	Isiah Moore (Jr.)	
RT	78	Andres Preciado (Sr.)	65	Zachary Troughton (Sr.)	
TE	85	John Bates (So.)	86	Chase Blakley (Sr.)	
QB	4	**Brett Rypien (Sr.)**	10	Chase Cord (Fr.)	
RB	22	**Alexander Mattison (Jr.)**	34	Robert Mahone (So.)	
DEFENSE (9)					
DE	91	**Durrant Miles (Sr.)**	93	Chase Hatada (Jr.)	
NT	98	**Sonatane Lui (Jr.)**	57	Emmanuel Fesili (Jr.)	
DT	55	**David Moa (Sr.)**	54	Matt Locher (Jr.)	
STUD	99	Curtis Weaver (So.)	8	**Jabril Frazier (Sr.)**	
MLB	58	**Tyson Maeva (Jr.)**	7	Ezekiel Noa (Fr.)	
OLB	36	Blake Whitlock (Sr.)	44	Riley Whimpey (So.)	
NB	28	Kekaula Kaniho (So.)	9	Desmond Williams (So.)	
CB	14	**Tyler Horton (Sr.)**	15	Jalen Walker (So.)	
CB	26	**Avery Williams (So.)**	18	Jermani Brown (Fr.)	
S	10	**Kekoa Nawahine (Jr.)**	32	Jordan Happle (So.)	
S	4	**DeAndre Pierce (Jr.)**	21	Tyreque Jones (Fr.)	
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K	96	Haden Hoggarth (Sr.)	**KR**	34 Robert Mahone (So.)	
P	49	Quinn Skillin (Sr.)	**PR**	26 Avery Williams (So.)	

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Brett Rypien, 348-218-2,877-6, 16 TDs
Rushing: Alexander Mattison, 212 att., 1,086 yds., 12 TDs
Receiving: A.J. Richardson, 33 rec., 494 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Kekoa Nawahine, 108
Sacks: Curtis Weaver, 11.0
Interceptions: Kekoa Nawahine, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Bryan Harsin
Record at School: 42-12 (4 years)
Career Record: 49-17 (5 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Zak Hill
Defensive Coordinator: Andy Avalos
Boise, ID • Albertsons Stadium (36,387)

Allison Corona/Boise State University

Colorado State **Rams**

National Forecast: **97** • MW Mountain Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **6-6, 5-3 MW**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug.	25	Hawaii
Aug.	31	vs. Colorado #
Sept.	8	Arkansas
Sept.	15	at Florida
Sept.	22	Illinois State
Oct.	6	at San José State
Oct.	13	New Mexico
Oct.	19	at Boise State
Oct.	27	Wyoming
Nov.	10	at Nevada
Nov.	17	Utah State
Nov.	24	at Air Force

#Denver

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 5-3 MW

Aug.	26	Oregon State	W	58-27
Sept.	1	vs. Colorado #	L	3-17
Sept.	9	Abilene Christian	W	38-10
Sept.	16	at Alabama	L	23-41
Sept.	30	at Hawaii	W	51-21
Oct.	7	at Utah State	W	27-14
Oct.	14	Nevada	W	44-42
Oct.	20	at New Mexico	W	27-24
Oct.	28	Air Force	L	28-45
Nov.	4	at Wyoming	L	13-16
Nov.	11	Boise State (ot)	L	52-59
Nov.	18	San José State	W	42-14
Dec.	16	vs. Marshall %	L	28-31

#Denver %New Mexico Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Nikko Hall, WR, Calabasas, CA
2. Kavesz Sherard, OT, Anderson, SC
3. Devin Phillips, DT, Monroe, LA
4. Dequan Jackson, OLB, Jacksonville, FL
5. Tywan Francis, S, New Orleans, LA
6. Trey McBride, TE, Fort Morgan, CO
7. Quinn Brinnon, S, Pleasanton, CA
8. Damion Dickens, DE, Lexington, MS*
9. Brandon Derrow, DE, Columbus, OH
10. Cam'Ron Carter, OLB, Tucker, GA

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MW	NATIONAL
Scoring	33.4 ppg	1	31
Rushing	200.2 ypg	5	31
Passing	292.2 ypg	1	20
Total	492.5 ypg	1	11
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	27.8 ppg	6	72
Rushing	187.1 ypg	6	90
Passing	244.5 ypg	10	97
Total	431.6 ypg	8	98
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
+2	+0.15	7	56

STAT CORNER

7.3

Against FBS teams with winning records, CSU allowed 7.3 yards per play and 37 points per game; vs. everyone else: 6.0 and 24.

OFFENSE The Rams are counting on a big season from graduate transfer quarterback K.J. Carta-Samuels, who signed after receiving his bachelor's degree from Washington but can't practice with CSU until fall camp. He's the heir apparent to Nick Stevens, who threw for 8,550 yards and a school-record 70 touchdowns over the past three seasons, and Collin Hill, the sophomore who was supposed to take over this year after redshirting in 2017 while recovering from a torn ACL. Hill tore the ACL in his left knee again just before the start of spring practices and could miss the entire season.

CSU also lost a 1,413-yard receiver and Biletnikoff finalist in Michael Gallup and a 1,399-yard rusher in Dalyn Dawkins, as well as three of five starters on the offensive line and the top tight end from an offense that averaged a school-record 492.5 yards per game.

There's still plenty of talent, though. Senior receiver Olabisi Johnson has caught 69 passes for 1,208 yards and six TDs over the past two seasons; sophomore Warren Jackson had two TD catches last year in a game at Alabama; and senior Preston Williams, who sat out last year after transferring from Tennessee, was one of the top prospects in the country coming out of high school.

Senior Izzy Matthews, who has run for 1,937 yards and 26 touchdowns the past three seasons, leads a strong group of running backs that also includes sophomore Rashaad Boddie and junior Marvin Kinsey, a 500-yard rusher in 2016.

DEFENSE CSU is completely rebuilding a defense that ranked among the Mountain West's worst last season, allowing 431.6 yards per game. New defensive coordinator John Jancek, who held the same position at Tennessee from 2013-15, has four new position coaches working with him through the transition to a 4-3 base alignment from the 3-4 the Rams had run the previous two years.

Last year's top two tacklers, senior linebacker Josh Watson (109) and senior safety Jordan Fogal (71), are back, as are a couple of other key performers in linebackers Max McDonald and Tre Thomas and safety Jamal Hicks, who missed the final five games of 2017 with a broken arm. The Rams will run more of an attacking defense, with a variety of stunts and blitzes, under Jancek than they employed under former coordinator Marty English in an effort to make more big plays.

SPECIALISTS The Rams have two of the MW's top specialists back in kicker Wyatt Bryan, who has made 42-of-54 field goal attempts over the past three seasons, and punter Ryan Stonehouse, who averaged 45.9 yards per kick as a true freshman in 2017.

FINAL ANALYSIS The offense might be able to avoid a significant drop-off if Carta-Samuels is able to learn coach Mike Bobo's playbook well enough to make the proper reads and check-offs. The quarterback run is likely to become part of the CSU offense, given the athletic abilities of Carta-Samuels and his top two backups — junior J.C. Robles and redshirt freshman Justice McCoy. The Rams were even experimenting in the spring with some option plays.

The defense will have to make significant strides if CSU hopes to compete for a Mountain Division title and sixth straight bowl appearance. A difficult early schedule that includes three consecutive games against schools in Power 5 conferences — Colorado, Arkansas and Florida — could put the Rams into a tailspin that might be difficult to reverse.



JOSH WATSON

"Mike Bobo can recruit, and the school has invested in the program in a big-time way. They want to be a Boise State, but it hasn't worked out yet."

— An opposing MW assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (4)					
WR	**81**	**Olabisi Johnson (Sr.)**	9	Warren Jackson (So).	
WR	11	Preston Williams (Jr.)	3	EJ Scott (Fr.)	
LT		T.J. Roundtree (Sr.)	69	Barry Wesley (R-Fr.)	
LG	71	Jeff Taylor (Jr.)	73	Tyler Bjorklund (Sr.)	
C	51	Colby Meeks (Sr.)	69	Barry Wesley (Fr.)	
RG	**72**	**Nicho Garcia (Sr.)**	65	Luis Lebron (Fr.)	
RT	**78**	**Ben Knox (Sr)**	64	Scott Brooks (So.)	
TE	**16**	**Cameron Butler (So.)**	82	Isiah Pannunzio (So.)	
QB		K.J. Carta-Samuels (Sr.)	2	Justice McCoy (Fr.)	
RB	24	Izzy Matthews (Sr.)	28	Rashaad Boddie (So.)	
FB	46	Adam Prentice (Jr.)	45	Nate Ryken (Sr.)	
DEFENSE (5)					
DE	97	Toby McBride (Jr.)	**42**	**Arjay Jean (Jr.)**	
DT	95	Richard King (Jr.)	47	Anthony Smith (So.)	
DT	98	Ellison Hubbard (So.)	92	Livingston Paogofie (So.)	
DE	33	Emmanuel Jones (So.)	91	Jan-Phillip Bombek (Jr.)	
WLB	**44**	**Max McDonald (Jr.)**	13	Trey Sutton (So.)	
MLB	**55**	**Josh Watson (Sr.)**	53	Caleb Smith (Sr.)	
SLB	52	Tre Thomas (Sr.)	51	Patrick Moody (So.)	
CB	18	Braylin Scott (Jr.)	17	Christian Cumber (Fr.)	
CB	**14**	**Anthony Hawkins (Jr.)**	21	Rashad Ajayi (Fr.)	
SS	7	Jamal Hicks (Jr.)	9	Jadon Walker (So.)	
FS	**11**	**Jordan Fogal (Sr.)**	18	Braylin Scott (Jr.)	
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K	96	Wyatt Bryan (Sr.)	**KR**	5 Marvin Kinsey (Jr.)	
P	41	Ryan Stonehouse (So.)	**PR**	81 Olabisi Johnson (Sr.)	

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: None
Rushing: Izzy Matthews, 132 att., 613 yds., 8 TDs
Receiving: Olabisi Johnson, 41 rec., 595 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Josh Watson, 109
Sacks: Richard King, 2.5
Interceptions: Anthony Hawkins, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mike Bobo
Record at School: 21-18 (3 years)
Career Record: 21-18 (3 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Dave Johnson
Defensive Coordinator: John Jancek
Fort Collins, CO • Colorado State Stadium (41,200)

CSU Athletics

New Mexico **Lobos**

National Forecast: **118** • MW Mountain Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **3-9, 1-7 MW**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Incarnate Word
Sept.	8	at Wisconsin
Sept.	15	at New Mexico State
Sept.	29	Liberty
Oct.	6	at UNLV
Oct.	13	at Colorado State
Oct.	20	Fresno State
Oct.	27	at Utah State
Nov.	3	San Diego State
Nov.	10	at Air Force
Nov.	17	Boise State
Nov.	24	Wyoming

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 3-9, 1-7 MW

Sept.	2	Abilene Christian	W	38-14
Sept.	9	New Mexico State	L	28-30
Sept.	14	at Boise State	L	14-28
Sept.	23	at Tulsa	W	16-13
Sept.	30	Air Force	W	56-38
Oct.	14	at Fresno State	L	0-38
Oct.	20	Colorado State	L	24-27
Oct.	28	at Wyoming	L	3-42
Nov.	4	Utah State	L	10-24
Nov.	11	at Texas A&M	L	14-55
Nov.	17	UNLV	L	35-38
Nov.	24	at San Diego State	L	10-35

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Sheriron Jones, QB, Moreno Valley, CA*
2. L.O. Johnson, RB, Waunakee, WI
3. Dylan Horton, LB, Frisco, TX
4. Trae Hall, QB, Henderson, TX
5. Cedric Patterson, WR, Crosby, TX
6. Jeffrey Jones Jr., TE, St. Louis, MO
7. Tre Bland, OG, Ontario, CA*
8. David Zavala, OT, Lakewood, CA*
9. Jarred Sylvester, OT, Clayton, NJ*
10. A.J. Greeley, CB, Fresno, CA*

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MW	NATIONAL
Scoring	20.7 ppg	11	114
Rushing	235.4 ypg	4	19
Passing	124.1 ypg	11	123
Total	359.5 ypg	10	99
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	31.8 ppg	7	93
Rushing	157.4 ypg	4	55
Passing	240.6 ypg	9	88
Total	398.0 ypg	6	70
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
-16	-1.33	11	127

STAT CORNER

5.2

After averaging 6.6 yards per carry with 48 touchdowns in 2016, the Lobos managed just 5.2 and 21, respectively, last year.

OFFENSE After leading the nation in rushing offense in 2016, New Mexico saw its rushing average drop by 115 yards per game in 2017. That prompted coach Bob Davie to make the interesting decision to alter the scheme from a triple-option attack to a more traditional spread option.

The switch entailed the hiring of former Arizona offensive coordinator Calvin Magee, whose mission is to revive a dormant passing attack. Magee has a QB to run his scheme in sophomore Tevaka Tuioti, who earned ample playing time last season despite the presence of then-senior starter Lamar Jordan. Tuioti led the team with 705 passing yards in 2017. Pushing him will be senior Coltin Gerhart (brother of former Stanford standout Toby) and Tennessee transfer Sheriron Jones, who played in junior college last year.

UNM added junior college depth at running back, signing Ahmari Davis to compete for playing time with incumbent Tyrone Owens. Kentrail Moran and Daevon Vigilant also will carry the ball. At wide receiver, the Lobos have several familiar faces expected to take on increased roles. Jay Griffin IV (29 catches, 393 yards, four TDs) had a breakout 2017 season. Seniors Delane Hart-Johnson and Patrick Reed and junior Q'Drennan have the most experience. Dynamic kick returner Elijah Lilly moves from defensive back to wide receiver to give the offense another threat.

Senior guard Aaron Jenkins returns with a chip on his shoulder. There is limited experience elsewhere on the line. Junior college transfers Jarred Sylvester and David Zavala should compete for starting roles.

DEFENSE Coordinator Kevin Cosgrove continues to make incremental improvements — the 2017 Lobos defense allowed its fewest yards per game in nine years. But after amassing 25 takeaways in 2015, UNM's D had just 26 in 2016 and 2017 combined. That, combined with the struggles on offense, contributed heavily to the team's 3–9 record last fall.

Senior end Cody Baker is the leader of the defensive line. Senior Jermane Conyers and junior Aaron Blackwell have experience, and junior college transfers Erin Austin and Trent Sellers add depth.

Likewise, senior middle linebacker Alex Hart has plenty of experience. Rush ends/outside backers Rhashaun Epting and Jordan Flack are back. The Lobos don't have much proven depth.

Cornerbacks Jalin Burrell and D'Angelo Ross are the strength of UNM's defense. They combined for 21 pass deflections last year. Blair Manly and Corey Hightower add depth. Free safety Bijon Parker has experience but must stay healthy. Stanley Barnwell and William Hobdy will take on greater roles in the secondary.

SPECIALISTS The Lobos must replace stalwarts at both placekicker (Jason Sanders) and punter (Corey Bojorquez) and have recruited incoming freshman kicker Stephen Ruiz and junior college transfer (and Australian-born) punter Tyson Dyer to step in. Lilly, who has two career kick returns for touchdowns, is a difference maker.

FINAL ANALYSIS The program is at a crossroads after seven straight losses to finish 2017, an offensive scheme change and off-field issues for Davie, who served a 30-day suspension during spring practice for a violation of school policy. If the offense clicks, the defense forces turnovers and little drop-off occurs on special teams, UNM can approach its 2016 form when it went 9–4. Any early struggles, however, could spell disaster.



TYRONE OWENS

"They'll spread out more and work the receivers more, which should work well for them. They've got more skill-position talent than most traditional option teams."

-An opposing MW assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	8	**Q'Drennan (Jr.)**	2	Delane Hart-Johnson (Sr.)
WR	5	**Patrick Reed (Sr.)**	15	Emmanuel Harris (Sr.)
WR	23	Jay Griffin IV (So.)	19	Elijah Lilly (Jr.)
LT	76	Jarred Sylvester (Jr.)	79	Chris Estrella (Jr.)
LG	77	Charlie Grammel (Jr.)	71	David Zavala (Jr.)
C	69	Beau Holt (Jr.)	54	Radson Jang (Fr.)
RG	55	**Aaron Jenkins (Sr.)**		Tre Bland (Jr.)
RT	50	Teton Saltes (So.)	68	Nick Iacovangelo (Jr.)
TE	10	Zahneer Shuler (Sr.)	88	**Marcus Williams (So.)**
QB	16	Tevaka Tuioti (So.)	11	Coltin Gerhart (Sr.)
RB	25	**Tyrone Owens (Sr.)**	20	Ahmari Davis (Jr.)

DEFENSE (6)

DE	53	**Cody Baker (Sr.)**	55	Emmanuel Joseph (So.)
NT	52	Aaron Blackwell (Jr.)	92	Jermane Conyers (Sr.)
DE	84	Trent Sellers (Jr.)	90	Erin Austin (Jr.)
OLB	99	**Rhashaun Epting (So.)**	57	Everett Powell (Sr.)
MLB	33	**Alex Hart (Sr.)**	45	Evahelotu Tohi (Sr.)
WLB	29	Jordan Flack (Sr.)	37	DaQuan Baker (Sr.)
CB	3	**D'Angelo Ross (Sr.)**	7	Blair Manly (Jr.)
CB	13	**Jalin Burrell (Sr.)**	21	Corey Hightower (So.)
NB	9	Stanley Barnwell (Sr.)	2	A.J. Greeley (Jr.)
SS	12	Dejohn Rogers (Jr.)		Patrick Peek (Jr.)
FS	4	**Bijon Parker (Sr.)**	14	Gabe Ortega (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K		Stephen Ruiz (Fr.)	KR	19 Elijah Lilly (Jr.)
P		Tyson Dyer (So.)	PR	12 Dejohn Rogers (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Tevaka Tuioti, 118-57-705-6, 4 TDs
Rushing: Tyrone Owens, 139 att., 770 yds., 4 TDs
Receiving: Jay Griffin IV, 29 rec., 393 yds., 4 TDs
Tackles: Alex Hart, 58
Sacks: Emmanuel Joseph, 2.5
Interceptions: Three players tied with 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Bob Davie
Record at School: 30-45 (6 years)
Career Record: 65-70 (11 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Calvin Magee
Defensive Coordinator: Kevin Cosgrove
Albuquerque, NM • Dreamstyle Stadium (39,224)

AP

Utah State **Aggies**

National Forecast: **82** • MW Mountain Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **8-4, 5-3 MW**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at Michigan State
Sept.	8	New Mexico State
Sept.	13	Tennessee Tech
Sept.	22	Air Force
Oct.	5	at BYU
Oct.	13	UNLV
Oct.	20	at Wyoming
Oct.	27	New Mexico
Nov.	3	at Hawaii
Nov.	10	San Jose State
Nov.	17	at Colorado State
Nov.	24	at Boise State

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 6-7, 4-4 MW

Sept.	1	at Wisconsin	L	10-59
Sept.	7	Idaho State	W	51-13
Sept.	16	at Wake Forest	L	10-46
Sept.	23	at San José State	W	61-10
Sept.	29	BYU	W	40-24
Oct.	7	Colorado State	L	14-27
Oct.	14	Wyoming	L	23-28
Oct.	21	at UNLV	W	52-28
Oct.	28	Boise State	L	14-41
Nov.	4	at New Mexico	W	24-10
Nov.	18	Hawaii	W	38-0
Nov.	25	at Air Force	L	35-38
Dec.	29	vs. New Mexico St. # (ot)	L	20-26

#Arizona Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Andy Koch, OL, Eastvale, CA
2. D.J. Williams, CB, Smyrna, TN*
3. Darwin Thompson, RB, Jenks, OK*
4. Hale Motu'apuaka, DL, Honolulu, HI
5. Karene Reid, OLB, American Fork, UT
6. Seni Tuiaki, DE, Salt Lake City, UT
7. Kyler Hack, OT, Las Vegas, NV*
8. Johnson Hansen, ILB, Salt Lake City, UT
9. Karter Shaw, OG, South Jordan, UT
10. Mitch Medina, OLB, Sandy, UT

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MW	NATIONAL
Scoring	30.2 ppg	5	51
Rushing	171.4 ypg	6	56
Passing	226.0 ypg	6	69
Total	397.4 ypg	8	68
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	26.9 ppg	5	67
Rushing	216.4 ypg	9	116
Passing	182.5 ypg	4	19
Total	398.8 ypg	7	73
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
+5	+0.38	5	30

STAT CORNER

18.4

Jalen Davis will be tough to replace — the corner made 18.4% of USU's havoc plays (TFLs, passes defensed, forced fumbles).

OFFENSE There is experience throughout the offense, but developing consistent receivers will be a key to success for Utah State in 2018. "We need some wideouts to step up in the slot and outside," coach Matt Wells says. "We need other receivers to step up to complement Ron'quavion [Tarver]."

Tarver caught 48 passes for 569 yards and seven scores. DJ Nelson moved from quarterback to the slot, giving the receiving corps some needed depth. At tight end, the Aggies are in good hands with Dax Raymond and Carson Terrell. Raymond caught 41 passes for 456 yards and a score.

Jordan Love started the final six games as a freshman at quarterback and solidified himself as the No. 1 option in the spring. Love passed for 1,631 yards and eight touchdowns while completing 55 percent of his attempts. His backup will be determined in fall camp.

Five starting offensive linemen return, including honorable mention all-league honorees Roman Andrus and Quin Ficklin. Freshman Alfred Edwards may end up starting at tackle as he pushed the veterans and drew praise during spring ball. There is depth in the trenches.

The top rusher graduated, but the Aggies should be better at running back this fall with the addition of junior college transfer Darwin Thompson, one of the top prospects in the Aggies' 2018 recruiting class. Gerold Bright, who moved from receiver to the backfield during last season, has gained weight and gotten stronger. Tre Miller played some as a true freshman last fall.

"The opportunity for someone to step in at running back is there," Wells says. "I expect that battle to go through training camp."

DEFENSE Losing two all-conference defensive backs would worry most teams, but the Aggies are confident there is enough talent to remain strong in the secondary. Safety Gaje Ferguson, who had 90 tackles in 2017, will lead the group. Redshirt freshman Andre Grayson is expected to be a top cornerback. The staff used the spring to find the right roles for other members of the secondary.

Linebacker Suli Tamaivena was the leading tackler in 2017, recording 111 stops. Chase Christiansen, David Woodward and newcomer Tipa Galeai will be big contributors as well. "Tipa Galeai is going to be a major force to be reckoned with," Wells says.

Both starting ends are back, and nose guard Christopher 'Unga will anchor the defensive line.

One of the few coaching changes this year: The well-traveled Keith Patterson arrives as defensive coordinator after a four-year stop at Arizona State.

SPECIALISTS Placekicker Dominik Eberle was a Lou Groza Award finalist last season after converting 18-of-24 attempts. Veteran punter Aaron Dalton is back for his fourth season as the Aggies' punter.

FINAL ANALYSIS Winning six games and getting back to a bowl game last year was a nice step forward, but there is a bad taste in Logan after the Aggies dropped their last two games — the regular-season finale at Air Force in the final two minutes and the Arizona Bowl to New Mexico State in overtime.

With four of the first six games at home, the Aggies — who return 16 starters and feature talent on across the board — could build some momentum by midseason and put themselves in position to be a factor in the Mountain Division for the first time in three years. At a minimum, Utah State should head to a bowl game for the seventh time in eight seasons.



SULI TAMAIVENA

"The smartest thing they've done is stick by (Matt Wells) and his staff during this recent downturn. They're the sleeper team in the conference."

— An opposing MW assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (9)

WR	1	**Ron'quavion Tarver (Sr.)**	14	Chad Artist (Jr.)
WR	16	**Jordan Nathan (So.)**	12	DJ Nelson (Sr.)
WR	81	Savon Scarver (So.)	84	Taylor Compton (So.)
LT	76	**Roman Andrus (Sr.)**	72	Alfred Edwards (Fr.)
LG	68	**Moroni Iniguez (Jr.)**	75	Ty Shaw (So.)
C	51	**Quin Ficklin (Sr.)**	58	Demytrick Ali'ifua (So.)
RG	70	**Rob Castaneda (Sr.)**	73	Kyler Hack (So.)
RT	52	**Sean Taylor (Sr.)**	66	KJ Uluave (Sr.)
TE	87	**Dax Raymond (Jr.)**	86	Carson Terrell (So.)
QB	10	**Jordan Love (So.)**	3	Henry Colombi (Fr.)
RB	8	Gerold Bright (Jr.)	5	Darwin Thompson (Jr.)

DEFENSE (7)

DE	55	**Adewale Adeoye (Sr.)**	93	Jacoby Wildman (Jr.)
NG	96	**Christopher 'Unga (Jr.)**	94	Caden Andersen (So.)
DE	91	Devon Anderson (Jr.)	41	Fua Leilua (Jr.)
OLB	22	Tipa Galeai (Jr.)	39	Maika Magalei (So.)
ILB	48	**Chase Christiansen (Sr.)**	46	Mason Tobeck (Jr.)
ILB	42	**Suli Tamaivena (Sr.)**	9	David Woodward (So.)
OLB	3	Jontrell Rocquemore (Sr.)	15	Baron Gajkowski (So.)
CB	6	**Cameron Haney (Jr.)**	7	DJ Williams (Jr.)
CB	27	Deante Fortenberry (Sr.)	30	Andre Grayson (Fr.)
SS	23	**Gaje Ferguson (Sr.)**	4	Aaron Wade (Sr.)
FS	36	**Ja'Marcus Ingram (So.)**	29	Zach Swenson (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	62	Dominik Eberle (Jr.)	KR	81	Savon Scarver (So.)
P	89	Aaron Dalton (Sr.)	PR	16	Jordan Nathan (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Jordan Love, 235-129-1,631-6, 8 TDs
Rushing: Eltoro Allen, 68 att., 284 yds., 1 TD
Receiving: Ron'quavion Tarver, 48 rec., 569 yds., 7 TDs
Tackles: Suli Tamaivena, 111
Sacks: Suli Tamaivena, Deante Fortenberry, 3.0
Interceptions: Four players tied with 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Matt Wells
Record at School: 34-32 (5 years)
Career Record: 34-32 (5 years)
Offensive Coordinator: David Yost
Defensive Coordinators: Frank Maile, Keith Patterson
Logan, UT • Maverik Stadium (25,513)

Wade Denniston/USU Athletic Media Relations

Wyoming **Cowboys**

National Forecast: **83** • MW Mountain Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **7-5, 5-3 MW**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug.	25	at New Mexico State
Sept.	1	Washington State
Sept.	8	at Missouri
Sept.	15	Wofford
Sept.	29	Boise State
Oct.	6	at Hawaii
Oct.	13	at Fresno State
Oct.	20	Utah State
Oct.	27	at Colorado State
Nov.	3	San Jose State
Nov.	17	Air Force
Nov.	24	at New Mexico

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 8-5, 5-3 MW

Sept.	2	at Iowa	L	3-24
Sept.	9	Gardner-Webb	W	27-0
Sept.	16	Oregon	L	13-49
Sept.	23	Hawaii (ot)	W	28-21
Sept.	30	Texas State	W	45-10
Oct.	14	at Utah State	W	28-23
Oct.	21	at Boise State	L	14-24
Oct.	28	New Mexico	W	42-3
Nov.	4	Colorado State	W	16-13
Nov.	11	at Air Force	W	28-14
Nov.	18	Fresno State	L	7-13
Nov.	25	at San Jose State	L	17-20
Dec.	22	vs. Central Michigan #	W	37-14

#Famous Idaho Potato Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Sean Chambers, QB, Kerman, CA
2. Chad Muma, LB, Parker, CO
3. Jaxon Boley, TE, Hodgenville, KY
4. De'Vaughn Brown, DE, Antioch, CA
5. Camron Donatlan, WR, Aurora, IL
6. Miles Williams, CB, Oxnard, CA
7. Ja'Lani Ellison, ATH, Reseda, CA
8. Jackson Marcotte, TE, Mount Carmel, IL
9. Gunner Gentry, WR, Aurora, CO
10. Reow Jackson, ATH, Eugene, OR

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MW	NATIONAL
Scoring	23.5 ppg	9	104
Rushing	108.8 ypg	12	118
Passing	177.2 ypg	9	104
Total	286.0 ypg	12	126
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	17.5 ppg	1	9
Rushing	160.3 ypg	5	60
Passing	174.9 ypg	2	13
Total	335.2 ypg	4	23
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
+24	+1.85	1	1

STAT CORNER

+24

Based on fumble recovery and interception rates, Wyoming's expected turnover margin was plus-8.9. Actual turnover margin: plus-24.

OFFENSE The biggest question in Laramie is who will replace Josh Allen at quarterback. Senior Nick Smith and redshirt freshman Tyler Vander Waal are the top candidates. Smith has four starts under his belt, including two late last season when Allen was injured. Vander Waal has the size and skill set the coaches like.

The Cowboys welcome back their top two running backs in sophomore Trey Woods and junior Kellen Overstreet, who combined for 974 yards and five touchdowns last season, but the coaches want more from that position. Wyoming uses a fullback in its pro-style offense but must replace four-year starter Drew Van Maanen. Jaylon Watson is the top candidate.

Everyone returns at wide receiver and tight end. Junior receiver Austin Conway, who signed with Wyoming to play basketball, led the team with 62 catches for 553 yards last season. Junior C.J. Johnson averaged a team-best 17.7 yards per catch and had a team-high seven receiving touchdowns. Johnson suffered a knee injury in Wyoming's 37–14 victory over Central Michigan in the Famous Idaho Potato Bowl and may miss a couple of games to start the season.

The Cowboys have five players who have started games along the offensive line. The group is anchored by a pair of seniors — left tackle Zach Wallace and right guard Kaden Jackson.

DEFENSE Eight starters return from a group that led the country with 38 turnovers forced, including eight in its bowl win, and allowed 17.5 points per game.

Two first-team All-Mountain West players are back along the defensive line in senior end Carl Granderson and junior tackle Youhanna Ghaifan. Those two finished first and second on the team, respectively, in quarterback sacks and tackles for a loss last season.

Junior middle linebacker Logan Wilson, an in-state product from Casper, led Wyoming in tackles last season with 119. Junior outside linebacker Cassh Maluia is a nice complement to Wilson.

Wyoming may have the best safety duo in the Mountain West in seniors Andrew Wingard and Marcus Epps. Wingard has recorded 100-plus tackles in each of his first three seasons. In 2017, Wingard and Epps combined for nine interceptions.

Cornerback is a big question but should get a boost with the return of junior Antonio Hull, who missed all but one game last season with a leg injury and received a medical redshirt. Hull started 20 games over his first two years. The coaches expect big things from redshirt freshmen C.J. Coldon and Keyon Blankenbaker.

SPECIALISTS Junior placekicker Cooper Rothe made 15-of-18 field goal attempts last season, including 10 of his last 11. After a rough start as a true freshman, Tim Zaleski averaged 39.2 yards per punt. Conway averaged 10.4 yards per punt return, and Tyler Hall returned two kickoffs for touchdowns last season.

FINAL ANALYSIS The defense should keep the Cowboys in games and even win them a few until the offense catches up. Even with Allen, Wyoming wasn't as productive offensively as coach Craig Bohl expects. If the new quarterback can be efficient and protect the ball and the rest of the offense improves, Wyoming is good enough to contend for the Mountain Division title and do something that has never been done in school history — play in a bowl game for a third consecutive season.



LOGAN WILSON

"The defense has been better and more disciplined each season since (Craig Bohl) got there. They create turnovers better than anyone in the league."

— An opposing MW assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (10)					
WR	80	**James Price (Sr.)**	2	Jared Scott (So.)	
WR	25	**Austin Conway (Jr.)**	14	**C.J. Johnson (Jr.)**	
LT	72	**Zach Wallace (Sr.)**	62	Rudy Stofer (Fr.)	
LG	55	**Gavin Rush (Jr.)**	69	Eric Abojei (Fr.)	
C	79	**Logan Harris (So.)**	73	Keegan Cryder (Fr.)	
RG	61	**Kaden Jackson (Sr.)**	64	Zach Thatcher (So.)	
RT	78	**Alonzo Velazquez (So.)**	77	Pahl Schwab (Jr.)	
TE	81	Austin Fort (Sr.)	85	**Tyree Mayfield (Sr.)**	
QB	18	Tyler Vander Waal (Fr.)	15	Nick Smith (Sr.)	
RB	6	**Trey Woods (So.)**	29	Kellen Overstreet (Jr.)	
FB	35	Jaylon Watson (Jr.)	54	Austin Lopez (Jr.)	
DEFENSE (8)					
DE	91	**Carl Granderson (Sr.)**	53	**Josiah Hall (Jr.)**	
NT	96	**Sidney Malauulu (Sr.)**	87	Conner Cain (Sr.)	
DT	93	**Youhanna Ghaifan (Jr.)**	86	Javaree Jackson (So.)	
DE	42	Kevin Prosser (Sr.)	88	Garrett Crall (So.)	
OLB	46	**Cassh Maluia (Jr.)**	50	Ryan Gatoloai-Faupula (So.)	
MLB	30	**Logan Wilson (Jr.)**	45	Adam Pilapil (Sr.)	
OLB	9	Tyler Hall (Jr.)	7	Chavez Pownell Jr. (Sr.)	
CB	4	Antonio Hull (Jr.)	18	Keyon Blankenbaker (Fr.)	
CB	21	C.J. Coldon (Fr.)	22	Sidney Washington (So.)	
SS	28	**Andrew Wingard (Sr.)**	24	Braden Smith (So.)	
FS	6	**Marcus Epps (Sr.)**	3	Alijah Halliburton (Jr.)	
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K	40	Cooper Rothe (Jr.)	**KR**	9 Tyler Hall (Jr.)	
P	27	Tim Zaleski (So.)	**PR**	25 Austin Conway (Jr.)	

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Nick Smith, 74-40-471-2, 2 TDs
Rushing: Trey Woods, 142 att., 493 yds., 2 TDs
Receiving: Austin Conway, 62 rec., 553 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: Logan Wilson, 119
Sacks: Carl Granderson, 9.5
Interceptions: Andrew Wingard, 5

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Craig Bohl
Record at School: 22-29 (4 years)
Career Record: 126-61 (15 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Brent Vigen
Defensive Coordinator: Scottie Hazelton
Laramie, WY • War Memorial Stadium (29,181)

Troy Babbitt-UW Media-Athletics

Fresno State **Bulldogs**

National Forecast: **48** • MW West Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **8-4, 6-2 MW**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Idaho
Sept.	8	at Minnesota
Sept.	15	at UCLA
Sept.	29	Toledo
Oct.	6	at Nevada
Oct.	13	Wyoming
Oct.	20	at New Mexico
Oct.	27	Hawaii
Nov.	3	at UNLV
Nov.	10	at Boise State
Nov.	17	San Diego State
Nov.	24	San Jose State

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 10-4, 7-1 MW

Sept.	2	Incarnate Word	W	66-0
Sept.	9	at Alabama	L	10-41
Sept.	16	at Washington	L	16-48
Sept.	30	Nevada	W	41-21
Oct.	7	at San Jose State	W	27-10
Oct.	14	New Mexico	W	38-0
Oct.	21	at San Diego State	W	27-3
Oct.	28	UNLV	L	16-26
Nov.	4	BYU	W	20-13
Nov.	11	at Hawaii	W	31-21
Nov.	18	at Wyoming	W	13-7
Nov.	25	Boise State	W	28-17
Dec.	2	at Boise State #	L	14-17
Dec.	24	vs. Houston %	W	33-27

#MW Championship %Hawaii Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Tyrone Sampson Jr., C, Detroit, MI
2. Isaiah Johnson, ATH, Modesto, CA
3. Emoryie Edwards, WR, Tulare, CA
4. Steven Comstock, QB, Covina, CA
5. Matt Lawson, DT, Ontario, CA
6. Matt Kjeldgaard, DT, Oakdale, CA
7. Nick Abbs, OT, Portland, OR*
8. Rodney Wright, WR, Fresno, CA
9. Ricardo Arias, WR, Fresno CA
10. Deshawn Ruffin, CB, Fresno, CA

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MW	NATIONAL
Scoring	27.1 ppg	8	77
Rushing	155.0 ypg	8	79
Passing	237.9 ypg	4	58
Total	392.9 ypg	9	72
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	17.9 ppg	2	10
Rushing	113.4 ypg	1	11
Passing	207.1 ypg	5	43
Total	320.6 ypg	2	15
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
+8	+0.57	3	25

STAT CORNER

+0.9

Fresno State's per-play yardage margin was plus-0.9 in 2017 (5.8 on offense, 4.9 on defense), a 2.0-yard improvement over 2016.

OFFENSE The quarterback position at Fresno State has been a revolving door since Derek Carr graduated in 2013. Marcus McMaryion finally stopped the spinning. After joining the Bulldogs well into fall camp as a graduate transfer from Oregon State, McMaryion seized the job from Chason Virgil for the Week 4 conference opener and proceeded to go 9–2 as the starter. McMaryion completed 62.1 percent of his passes and posted a 137.7 efficiency rating despite having little knowledge of the offense or time to build rapport with his receivers.

As well as McMaryion played, that inexperience showed up at critical points. His third-down completion percentage was just 41.4. Look for improvement there now that he has an entire offseason under his chinstrap.

Fresno State returns three of its top four wideouts in KeeSean Johnson, Jamire Jordan and Derrion Grim while welcoming home Fresno native and Oklahoma transfer Michiah Quick, a spring standout. Also back are last season's three-headed rushing trio — Ronnie Rivers, Jordan Mims and Josh Hokit — and the entire set of tight ends. Rivers, however, could miss the first month or two due to an injury.

Three starting offensive linemen return, but all three likely will line up at different positions. The coaching staff thinks so highly of Netane Muti that it moved him to left tackle, which means shifting Christian Cronk to right tackle. Inside, Micah St. Andrew converts from guard to center — which means the Bulldogs have a 6'3", 343-pounder snapping the football.

DEFENSE It's impossible to overstate Fresno State's remarkable turnaround on defense last season. Following several years of struggles, the Bulldogs surrendered just 17.9 points and 320.6 yards per game, their lowest in either category since 1991. Much of the credit went to coordinator Orlondo Steinauer, who returned to the Canadian Football League after one season in Central California and leaves the next man up, Bert Watts, to keep the mojo going.

Steinauer's 4-3 system is designed to attack and confuse quarterbacks by running multiple fronts and disguising coverages. Fresno State is keeping the basic blueprint intact. Only it'll be Watts, promoted from linebackers coach, making the calls on game day.

All three starting linebackers and four starting defensive backs return. In All-MW pick Jeffrey Allison, flanked by George Helmuth and James Bailey, the Bulldogs boast the best set of linebackers in the league. They may have the best secondary as well. Safeties Mike Bell and Juju Hughes ranked just below Allison and Helmuth in total tackles, while corner Jaron Bryant returned two of his four interceptions for touchdowns.

SPECIALISTS After losing kicker Jimmy Camacho, who racked up 40 touchbacks and a conference-best 25 field goals, all eyes will be on the right leg of presumed replacement Asa Fuller. Otherwise, this unit should be good to go.

FINAL ANALYSIS Jeff Tedford was a well-deserved National Coach of the Year finalist after Fresno State became just the second FBS team to go from double-digit losses (1–11) to double-digit wins (10-4). What can he do for an encore? A good start would be wresting the MW title away from Boise State after the two teams split the regular-season finale and MW Championship Game in consecutive weeks. With so many key starters back and a softer non-conference schedule (i.e. no Alabama or Washington), it's perfectly fine to dream bigger.



MARCUS McMARYION

"One of the best single-season turnarounds I've ever seen. Jeff Tedford hit all the right notes, especially with the quarterback (Marcus McMaryion)."

— An opposing MW assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	3	**KeeSean Johnson (Sr.)**	87	Namani Parker (Sr.)	
WR	1	**Jamire Jordan (Sr.)**	7	Derrion Grim (Jr.)	
WR	2	Michiah Quick (Sr.)	13	Justin Allen (Sr.)	
LT	52	**Netane Muti (So.)**	79	Nick Aibuedefe (Jr.)	
LG	71	Marc-David Bien-Aime (Fr.)	66	Quireo Woodley (So.)	
C	73	**Micah St. Andrew (Sr.)**	51	Markus Boyer (Sr.)	
RG	65	Syrus Tuitele (So.)	75	Zelan Tupuola (Fr.)	
RT	58	**Christian Cronk (Sr.)**	62	Logan Hughes (Sr.)	
TE	89	**Kyle Riddering (Sr.)**	16	Jared Rice (Jr.)	
QB	6	**Marcus McMaryion (Sr.)**	10	Jorge Reyna (Jr.)	
RB	22	Jordan Mims (So.)	33	Josh Hokit (Jr.)	

DEFENSE (7)

DE	33	Kwami Jones (Jr.)	1	Damien DeGruy (So.)
DT	90	Kevin Atkins (So.)	94	Patrick Belony (Sr.)
NT	98	Keiti Iakopo (Jr.)	93	Jasad Haynes (Jr.)
DE	5	Emeka Ndoh (Sr.)	96	Kevin Jeanniton (So.)
OLB	34	**George Helmuth (Sr.)**	29	Justin Rice (Jr.)
MLB	9	**Jeffrey Allison (Jr.)**	22	Trent Soechting (Sr.)
OLB	7	**James Bailey (Sr.)**	3	Mykal Walker (Jr.)
CB	6	**Tank Kelly (Sr.)**	26	Matt Boateng (Sr.)
CB	14	**Jaron Bryant (Jr.)**	25	Sherman Coleman (Sr.)
SS	23	**Juju Hughes (Jr.)**	27	Ka'Lonn Milton (Jr.)
FS	4	**Mike Bell (Jr.)**	15	Arron Mosby (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	37	Asa Fuller (Fr.)	KR	1	Jamire Jordan (Sr.)
P	47	Blake Cusick (Jr.)	PR	11	Dejonte O'Neal (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Marcus McMaryion, 351-218-2,726-5, 14 TDs
Rushing: Jordan Mims, 151 att., 627 yds., 6 TDs
Receiving: KeeSean Johnson, 77 rec. 1,013 yds., 8 TDs
Tackles: Jeffrey Allison, 126
Sacks: George Helmuth, Emeka Ndoh, 4.0
Interceptions: Jaron Bryant, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Jeff Tedford
Record at School: 10-4 (1 year)
Career Record: 92-61 (12 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Kalen DeBoer
Defensive Coordinator: Bert Watts
Fresno, CA • Bulldog Stadium (41,031)

Keith Kountz/Fresno State Athletics

Hawaii **Rainbow Warriors**

National Forecast: **121** • MW West Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **3-10, 1-7 MW**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug.	25	at Colorado State
Sept.	1	Navy
Sept.	8	Rice
Sept.	15	at Army
Sept.	22	Duquesne
Sept.	29	at San Jose State
Oct.	6	Wyoming
Oct.	13	at BYU
Oct.	20	Nevada
Oct.	27	at Fresno State
Nov.	3	Utah State
Nov.	17	UNLV
Nov.	24	at San Diego State

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 3-9, 1-7 MW

Aug.	26	at Massachusetts		W	38-35
Sept.	2	Western Carolina		W	41-18
Sept.	9	at UCLA		L	23-56
Sept.	23	at Wyoming	(ot)	L	21-28
Sept.	30	Colorado State		L	21-51
Oct.	7	at Nevada		L	21-35
Oct.	14	San Jose State		W	37-26
Oct.	28	San Diego State		L	7-28
Nov.	4	at UNLV		L	23-31
Nov.	11	Fresno State		L	21-31
Nov.	18	at Utah State		L	0-38
Nov.	25	BYU		L	20-30

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Michael Washington, WR, Monrovia, CA
2. Blessman Ta'ala, DT, Pago Pago, AS
3. Jonah Kahahawai-Welch, DE, Honolulu, HI
4. Solo Vaipulu, C, Corona, CA
5. Justus Tavai, DE, Manhattan Beach, CA
6. Manase Time, S, Santa Ana, CA*
7. Jonah Panoke, WR, Honolulu, HI
8. Kohl Levao, OG, Aberdeen, WA*
9. Khoury Bethley, LB, Chino, CA
10. Eric Rooks, Chicago, IL, WR

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MW	NATIONAL
Scoring	22.8 ppg	10	106
Rushing	168.2 ypg	7	60
Passing	234.5 ypg	5	63
Total	402.7 ypg	5	63
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	33.9 ppg	10	106
Rushing	210.2 ypg	8	111
Passing	248.6 ypg	11	99
Total	458.8 ypg	10	115
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
+1	+0.08	8	59

STAT CORNER

3.7

Hawaii went from averaging 5.3 points per trip inside the opponent's 40 in 2016 (11th) to 3.7 in 2017 (122nd), FBS' steepest drop.

OFFENSE After seven seasons without a winning record, Hawaii returns to its run-and-shoot roots for the first time since 2011 in an attempt to change its lagging fortunes. The offense that June Jones made popular in the islands from 1999-2007 is the most significant in a series of changes implemented by coach Nick Rolovich. And finding a quarterback to run it quickly became Job 1 when two-year starter Dru Brown announced plans to enroll at Oklahoma State as a graduate transfer. Sophomore Cole McDonald is the only quarterback on the roster to have thrown a pass for UH, and he launched just nine of them in 2017 in a mop-up role.

He will face competition from freshman Chevan Cordeiro, who was an all-state selection at Honolulu's powerhouse Saint Louis School running the run-and-shoot, as well as squad members Kyle Gallup and Justin Uahinui, freshman Jeremy Moussa and transfer Kolney Cassel, who has played at Sacramento State and SMU.

Dylan Collie, the team's leading receiver, transferred to BYU. The recovery of John Ursua, who was among the nation's leaders in receptions until suffering a season-ending knee injury in mid-October, is a must, as is rebuilding an offensive line that lost its left side and much of its depth. Its most experienced performer, center Asotui Eli, could find himself at left tackle as the Rainbow Warriors seek flexibility.

If that isn't enough of a challenge, Hawaii must also replace Diocemy Saint Juste, who set the school single-season rushing record (1,510 yards) in 2017. Sophomore Freddie Holly III's nine rushing attempts are the most by any returning running back, but he must polish his pass protection. Hekili Keliliki, Kaiwi Chung and Dayton Furuta will battle for the power role.

DEFENSE After ranking 105th or worse nationally in six major defensive categories, the defense got a thorough shaking up. Defensive coordinator Corey Batoon, who was at Florida Atlantic last season, is among three new assistants on that side of the ball.

He'll have a strong linebacker unit anchored by Jahlani Tavai, a second-team All-Mountain West selection who topped UH with 124 tackles, including 5.5 sacks. Solomon Matautia had 85 tackles and led the team with three interceptions. Jeremiah Pritchard had 6.5 tackles for a loss.

The defensive line will audition at least seven recruits — five of them from the junior college ranks — including Tavai's brother, Justice.

Rojesterman Farris II and Eugene Ford are solid corners, but the safety positions have to be rebuilt with newcomers and some shifting. Ikem Okeke is one of the more promising moves, coming over from linebacker.

SPECIALISTS An area that had been the most steady in previous years took a step back last season. Hawaii made only 4-of-9 field goals, and three of the four makes were in one game. The search for a placekicker could go on until the opener. Viane Moala, a 6'7" defensive end who blocked two kicks last season, transferred to Utah.

FINAL ANALYSIS The changes have been sweeping for a team that has six new assistant coaches, including defensive and special teams coordinators, and will see Rolovich call the offensive plays. The schedule gets more manageable, with no Power 5 foes for the first time in 16 years. But producing the first winning season since the 10–4 Western Athletic Conference tri-champions of 2010 still figures to be an uphill battle.



JAHLANI TAVAI

"Nick Rolovich can recruit, but they've had so much turnover. That's killed their development. You can spot the roster issues they've got right now."

— An opposing MW assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (2)

WR	9	Devan Stubblefield (Sr.)	81	Kalakaua Timoteo (Jr.)
WR	**5**	**John Ursua (Jr.)**	17	Cedric Byrd (Jr.)
WR	87	Kumoku Noa (So.)	49	Tristin Kamaka (Sr.)
WR	85	Marcus Armstrong-Brown (Sr.)	86	Eric Rooks (Fr.)
LT	**65**	**Asotui Eli (Sr.)**	58	Joey Nu'uanu-Kuhi'iki (So.)
LG	57	J.R. Hensley (Jr.)	56	Kamuela Borden (Fr.)
C	63	Taaga Tuulima (So.)		Solo Vaipulu (Fr.)
RG	59	Emil Graves (Jr.)		Alex Dalpe (Jr.)
RT	55	Micah Vanterpool (Fr.)		Gene Pryor (Jr.)
QB	13	Cole McDonald (So.)		Chevan Cordeiro (Fr.)
RB	21	Freddie Holly III (So.)	47	Kaiwi Chung (Sr.)

DEFENSE (4)

DE	92	Max Hendrie (So.)	48	Derek Thomas (So.)
NT	**91**	**Samiuela Akoteu (Jr.)**	66	Eperone Moananu (Jr.)
DE	96	Kaimana Padello (Jr.)	43	Tevarua Eldridge (Sr.)
OLB	**27**	**Solomon Matautia (Jr.)**	15	Paul Scott (So.)
ILB	**31**	**Jahlani Tavai (Sr.)**	33	Penei Pavihi (So.)
ILB	38	Malachi Mageo (Sr.)		Jonah Kahahawai-Welch (Fr.)
OLB	10	Jeremiah Pritchard (Jr.)	61	Wesley Faagau (So.)
CB	**18**	**Rojesterman Farris (Jr.)**	14	Manu Hudson-Rasmussen (Sr.)
CB	19	Eugene Ford (So.)	20	Zach Wilson (So.)
SS	16	Kalen Hicks (Jr.)		Manase Time (So.)
FS	22	Ikem Okeke (Jr.)	40	Dany Mulanga (Sr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	46	Alex Trifonovitch (Jr.)	KR	14 M. Hudson-Rasmussen (Sr.)
P	99	Stan Gaudion (So.)	PR	5 John Ursua (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Cole McDonald, 9-5-22-0, 1 TD
Rushing: Cole McDonald, 16 att., 138 yds., 1 TD
Receiving: John Ursua, 47 rec., 667 yds., 5 TDs
Tackles: Jahlani Tavai, 124
Sacks: Jahlani Tavai, 5.5
Interceptions: Solomon Matautia, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Nick Rolovich
Record at School: 10-16 (2 years)
Career Record: 10-16 (2 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Brian Smith
Defensive Coordinator: Corey Batoon
Honolulu, HI • Aloha Stadium (50,000)

Harry Caston

Nevada **Wolf Pack**

National Forecast: **99** • MW West Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **5-7, 4-4 MW**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Portland State
Sept.	8	at Vanderbilt
Sept.	15	Oregon State
Sept.	22	at Toledo
Sept.	29	at Air Force
Oct.	6	Fresno State
Oct.	13	Boise State
Oct.	20	at Hawaii
Oct.	27	San Diego State
Nov.	10	Colorado State
Nov.	17	at San Jose State
Nov.	24	at UNLV

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 4-8, 3-5 MW

Sept.	2	at Northwestern	L	20-31
Sept.	9	Toledo	L	24-37
Sept.	16	Idaho State	L	28-30
Sept.	23	at Washington State	L	7-45
Sept.	30	at Fresno State	L	21-41
Oct.	7	Hawaii	W	35-21
Oct.	14	at Colorado State	L	42-44
Oct.	20	Air Force	L	42-45
Nov.	4	at Boise State	L	14-41
Nov.	11	San Jose State	W	59-14
Nov.	18	at San Diego State	L	23-42
Nov.	25	UNLV	W	23-16

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Josiah Bradley, LB, Scottsdale, AZ
2. Toa Taua, RB, Lompoc, CA
3. Cole Turner, TE, Clackamas, OR
4. Romeo Doubs, WR, Los Angeles, CA
5. Kevin Scott, DT, Los Angeles, CA*
6. Kevin Coblentz, OT, Whittier, CA
7. Jermaine Ledbetter, OG, St. Petersburg, FL*
8. Charles Ross, WR, Culver City, CA
9. Tristan Nichols, DT, Kihei, HI*
10. Jaden Dedman, CB, Upland, CA

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MW	NATIONAL
Scoring	28.2 ppg	7	66
Rushing	127.2 ypg	10	108
Passing	270.4 ypg	2	32
Total	397.6 ypg	7	67
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	33.9 ppg	10	106
Rushing	208.3 ypg	7	110
Passing	263.1 ypg	12	111
Total	471.3 ypg	11	120
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
-2	-0.17	9	83

STAT CORNER

18.1

Nevada opponents gained at least 10 yards on 18.1 plays per game in 2017, the third most in FBS and most in the Mountain West.

OFFENSE If Jay Norvell erred in his first season as coach at Nevada, it was in going away from starting quarterback Ty Gangi too soon. The Wolf Pack's new-look Air Raid offense struggled with and without Gangi early in 2017, but when Gangi returned as starter, Norvell's offense quickly morphed into one of the conference's best. With Gangi (2,746 yards, 25 TDs, 11 INTs) back for his senior season, the Wolf Pack offense is poised again to flourish. And the athletic Gangi (233 rushing yards, four TDs) will have loads of skill position help.

The receiver group will be led by sophomore McLane Mannix (778 yards, six TDs), a Freshman All-American last year, and junior Brendan O'Leary-Orange (618 yards, four TDs). A third all-conference candidate could be junior Kaleb Fossum, who missed much of 2017 with injury. Andrew Celis, Trevion Armstrong and Daiyan Henley round out what should be Nevada's best position.

Bruising junior running back Kelton Moore (855 yards, four TDs) emerged midway through 2017 to add a desperately needed run threat. And junior Jaxson Kincaide offers a nice change of pace.

The loss of all-conference tackle Austin Corbett to the NFL leaves a significant hole on the offensive line. But Nevada returns three linemen who started games in 2017, led by center Sean Krepsz. Nevada added five offensive linemen in its 2018 recruiting class, injecting fresh talent to help reinforce the front.

DEFENSE To run the 3-3-5 stack employed by veteran coordinator Jeff Casteel, Nevada needs to get bigger and more physical, especially up front. That was reflected in the recruiting class, and the Pack will need immediate contributions from the four junior college defensive linemen, including one-time USC nose tackle Kevin Scott.

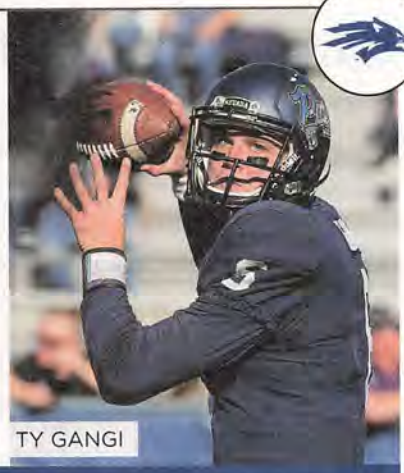
Two-time All-MW defensive end Malik Reed (6'1", 250) will make the move to linebacker this season, a testament to the Pack's size woes in 2017. Reed joins Gabriel Sewell and Lucas Weber to form a linebacking corps that could make some noise in 2018.

The Pack will need a boost from the safeties in Casteel's system. Free safety Dameon Baber is an all-conference talent who has had three multiple-interception games in his career. Fellow senior Asauni Rufus was en route to an all-conference season before a broken leg sidelined him for the final three games. Sophomore Nephi Sewell, the younger brother of Gabriel, was a pleasant surprise as a true freshman.

Nevada went through spring with only four cornerbacks on the roster and signed just three in its recruiting class. While there's talent on hand — E.J. Muhammad and Ahki Muhammad (no relation) have plenty of experience, and Daniel Brown and Berdale Robins both saw some action in 2017 — depth is a concern.

SPECIALISTS Junior Spencer Pettit (8-of-11 field goals) returns as one of the most established kickers in the Mountain West. Junior punter Quinton Conaway struggled at times in 2017 but was solid in the spring. The return game could be explosive, with a mix of Mannix, Fossum and Henley.

FINAL ANALYSIS Nevada's high-powered offense, a manageable non-conference schedule and a conference slate in which the Wolf Pack's toughest opponents travel to Reno could have Nevada flirting with bowl eligibility. If Nevada's defense can jell, the Wolf Pack have the potential to sneak up the standings and be a factor in the West Division.



TY GANGI

"Another rebuilding team that looked tremendously different at the end of the year. They got in the groove on offense. They can score really quickly."

— An opposing MW assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)				
WR	**17**	**Brendan O'Leary-Orange (Jr.)**	15	Trevion Armstrong (So.)
WR	**1**	**McLane Mannix (So.)**	3	Kaleb Fossum (Jr.)
WR	11	Daiyan Henley (So.)	4	Elijah Cooks (So.)
LT	**71**	**Jake Nelson (Jr.)**	74	Kevin Spencer (Jr.)
LG	**62**	**Anthony Palomares (Sr.)**	70	Nathan Edwards (So.)
C	**64**	**Sean Krepsz (Sr.)**	63	Amir Johnson (Fr.)
RG	75	Carl Burton-Hil (So.)		Jermaine Ledbetter (So.)
RT	76	Nate Brown (So.)	67	Gray Davis (Fr.)
TE	49	Trae Carter-Wells (Sr.)	31	Reagan Roberson (So.)
QB	**6**	**Ty Gangi (Sr.)**	10	Griffin Dahn (So.)
RB	**23**	**Kelton Moore (Jr.)**	5	Jaxson Kincaide (Jr.)
DEFENSE (7)				
DE	93	Jordan Silva (Sr.)	47	Kameron Toomer (So.)
NT	**96**	**Hausia Sekona (Jr.)**		Kevin Scott (Jr.)
DE	99	Korey Rush (Sr.)	92	Kaleb Meder (Jr.)
LB	**90**	**Malik Reed (Sr.)**	8	Maliek Broady (Jr.)
LB	**7**	**Gabriel Sewell (Jr.)**	30	Lawson Hall (So.)
LB	24	Lucas Weber (Sr.)	52	Kyle Adams (Jr.)
CB	**4**	**EJ Muhammad (Jr.)**	3	Ahki Muhammad (Sr.)
CB	25	Daniel Brown (Jr.)	15	Berdale Robins (So.)
S	**6**	**Nephi Sewell (So.)**	14	Mar'Quette Jackson (So.)
S	**5**	**Dameon Baber (Sr.)**	33	Morris Bowman (So.)
S	**2**	**Asauni Rufus (Sr.)**	28	Austin Arnold (So.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	48	Spencer Pettit (Jr.)	**KR**	11 Daiyan Henley (So.)
P	35	Quinton Conaway (Jr.)	**PR**	3 Kaleb Fossum (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Ty Gangi, 374-228-2,746-11, 25 TDs
Rushing: Kelton Moore, 164 att., 855 yds., 4 TDs
Receiving: McLane Mannix, 57 rec., 778 yds., 6 TDs
Tackles: Dameon Baber, 94
Sacks: Malik Reed, 8.0
Interceptions: Dameon Baber, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Jay Norvell
Record at School: 3-9 (1 year)
Career Record: 3-9 (1 year)
Offensive Coordinator: Matt Mumme
Defensive Coordinator: Jeff Casteel
Reno, NV • Mackay Stadium (30,000)

AP

San Diego State **Aztecs**

National Forecast: **44** • MW West Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **8-5, 6-2 MW**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	at Stanford
Sept.	8	Sacramento State
Sept.	15	Arizona State
Sept.	22	Eastern Michigan
Oct.	6	at Boise State
Oct.	13	Air Force
Oct.	20	San José State
Oct.	27	at Nevada
Nov.	3	at New Mexico
Nov.	10	UNLV
Nov.	17	at Fresno State
Nov.	24	Hawaii

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 10-3, 6-2 MW

Sept.	2	UC Davis	W	38-17
Sept.	9	at Arizona State	W	30-20
Sept.	16	Stanford	W	20-17
Sept.	23	at Air Force	W	28-24
Sept.	30	Northern Illinois	W	34-28
Oct.	7	at UNLV	W	41-10
Oct.	14	Boise State	L	14-31
Oct.	21	Fresno State	L	3-27
Oct.	28	at Hawaii	W	28-7
Nov.	4	at San José State	W	52-7
Nov.	18	Nevada	W	42-23
Nov.	24	New Mexico	W	35-10
Dec.	23	vs. Army #	L	35-42

#Armed Forces Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. J.R. Justice, WR, San Diego, CA
2. Kobe Smith, WR, Compton, CA
3. Nic McTear, TE, Frisco, TX
4. Zidane Thomas, RB, Peoria, AZ
5. William Dunkle, OT, Chula Vista, CA
6. Alama Uluave, C, Laie, HI
7. Rashad Scott, WR, San Diego, CA
8. Cedarious Barfield, DB, El Paso, TX
9. Denaylan Fuimaono, ATH, Long Beach, CA
10. Carson Baker, QB, San Diego, CA

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MW	NATIONAL
Scoring	30.8 ppg	4	45
Rushing	252.5 ypg	2	10
Passing	147.7 ypg	10	118
Total	400.2 ypg	6	64
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	20.2 ppg	3	21
Rushing	136.2 ypg	3	33
Passing	178.7 ypg	3	15
Total	314.8 ypg	1	11
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
+7	+0.54	4	26

STAT CORNER

7.8

SDSU opponents gained at least 10 yards on 7.8 plays per game in 2017, easily the fewest in FBS. The Aztecs swarm quickly.

OFFENSE The San Diego State rushing attack should again be one to be reckoned with as junior Juwan Washington ascends to the throne. Two seasons ago, Donnel Pumphrey finished his career as the NCAA's all-time leading rusher (6,405 yards), and last season Rashaad Penny posted the top rushing campaign in school history (nation-leading 2,248 yards along with 23 touchdowns). And just as there was little concern when Pumphrey moved on, there isn't any doubt among the San Diego State coaches that Washington will be up to the task of replacing Penny. He certainly displayed his talents while gaining 759 yards as a reserve last season.

The running attack will again be the primary method of producing points — the Aztecs averaged 30.8 points in 2017 — and will take pressure off an average passing game. Senior quarterback Christian Chapman is back for his third season as a starter, and he is noted more for his efficiency — 35 career touchdown passes against 11 interceptions — than throwing downfield darts. Chapman passed for fewer than 2,000 yards in each of the past two seasons.

Junior Fred Trevillion's 327 yards — on 12 receptions — rank as the most among the returning targets.

Left tackle Tyler Roemer and right guard Keith Ismael, both sophomores, headline another solid offensive line.

DEFENSE The Aztecs figure to again be a stingy unit after allowing 10 or fewer points on four occasions while ranking 21st nationally in scoring defense. They held Power 5 opponents Arizona State and Stanford to 20 and 17 points, respectively — and won both games.

The secondary has an emerging star in safety Tariq Thompson, who intercepted five passes and garnered multiple Freshman All-America honors last season. Thompson and senior Parker Baldwin (76 tackles) are standouts in the unit's three-safety alignment.

Senior outside linebacker Ronley Lakalaka (team-best 82 tackles) underwent offseason shoulder surgery but will have recovered when fall camp arrives. Junior Kyahva Tezino (59 tackles) figures to take another step forward with his production.

Senior tackle Noble Hall provides strength up front; he tied for the team lead with 8.5 tackles for a loss last season. Senior end Chibu Onyeukwu had a team-high 4.5 sacks and could potentially double that this season.

SPECIALISTS Senior placekicker John Baron II was 12-of-15 on field goals last season after setting a school record for made kicks (21) in 2016. He is also a big weapon in the field-position game, recording 33 touchbacks last season. Junior punter Brandon Heicklen doesn't always kick for distance, but 27 of his 59 punts resulted in fair catches. Washington again helps make up for the loss of Penny's kick-return prowess as he has a 26.1-yard average and three special teams scores over the past two seasons.

FINAL ANALYSIS San Diego State is a stellar 32–9 over the past three seasons and once again figures to be among the best of the Group of 5 teams. The Aztecs have become a dominant force in the Mountain West — they are 22–4 with two titles over the past three seasons — and the yearly expectation under coach Rocky Long is that they will be in the mix for a conference title. Long's method of pounding the ball on the ground offensively and assaulting opponents with an opportunistic defense assures that the Aztecs will be in the hunt for their fourth consecutive season of 10 or more wins.



JUWAN WASHINGTON

"On defense they're more versatile and bigger than what you get at our level. They can match up with P5 teams — just look at how they beat Stanford."

— An opposing MW assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	89	Fred Trevillion (Sr.)	36	Ethan Dedeaux (Fr.)	
WR	93	Tim Wilson (So.)	41	BJ Busbee (Fr.)	
LT	**74**	**Tyler Roemer (So.)**	71	Kyle Spalding (So.)	
LG	**79**	**Daishawn Dixon (Jr.)**	70	Ladji Bagayoko (Fr.)	
C	56	Dominic Gudino (So.)	62	Nick Gerhard (Jr.)	
RG	**60**	**Keith Ismael (So.)**	53	Douglas Tucker (So.)	
RT	**77**	**Ryan Pope (Sr.)**	76	Zach Thomas (So.)	
TE	82	Parker Houston (Jr.)	87	Kahale Warring (Jr.)	
QB	**10**	**Christian Chapman (Sr.)**	9	Ryan Agnew (Jr.)	
RB	29	Juwan Washington (Jr.)	22	Chase Jasmin (So.)	
FB	34	Isaac Lessard (Jr.)	4	Chad Woolsey (Sr.)	

DEFENSE (7)

DE	55	Chibu Onyeukwu (Sr.)	66	Shane Irwin (Fr.)	
DT	**95**	**Noble Hall (Sr.)**	61	Damon Moore (Sr.)	
DE	45	Anthony Luke (Sr.)	**68**	**Myles Cheatum (Jr.)**	
LB	**39**	**Ronley Lakalaka (Sr.)**	**42**	**Troy Cassidy (Jr.)**	
MLB	38	Andrew Aleki (So.)	47	Kaelin Himphill (So.)	
LB	44	Kyahva Tezino (Jr.)	54	Caden McDonald (Fr.)	
CB	**17**	**Ron Smith (Jr.)**	10	Jeff Clay (Jr.)	
CB	27	Kyree Woods (Jr.)	23	Darren Hall (So.)	
S	**14**	**Tariq Thompson (So.)**	32	Tayler Hawkins (Jr.)	
S	18	Trenton Thompson (So.)	48	Israel Cabrera (So.)	
NB	**33**	**Parker Baldwin (Sr.)**	37	Dwayne Johnson (So.)	

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	29	John Baron II (Sr.)	KR	29	Juwan Washington (Jr.)
P	59	Brandon Heicklen (Jr.)	PR	29	Juwan Washington (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Christian Chapman, 243-146-1,873-4, 13 TDs
Rushing: Juwan Washington, 127 att., 759 yds., 7 TDs
Receiving: Kahale Warring, 18 rec., 248 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: Ronley Lakalaka, 82
Sacks: Chibu Onyeukwu, 4.5
Interceptions: Tariq Thompson, 5

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Rocky Long
Record at School: 64-29 (7 years)
Career Record: 129-98 (18 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Jeff Horton
Defensive Coordinator: Zach Arnett
San Diego, CA • SDCCU Stadium (54,000)

Ernie Anderson, SDSU Athletic Media Relations

San Jose State **Spartans**

National Forecast: **125** • MW West Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **1-11, 0-8 MW**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	UC Davis
Sept.	8	at Washington State
Sept.	15	at Oregon
Sept.	29	Hawaii
Oct.	6	Colorado State
Oct.	13	Army
Oct.	20	at San Diego State
Oct.	27	UNLV
Nov.	3	at Wyoming
Nov.	10	at Utah State
Nov.	17	Nevada
Nov.	24	at Fresno State

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 2-11, 1-7 MW

Aug.	26	South Florida	L	22-42
Sept.	2	Cal Poly	W	34-13
Sept.	9	at Texas	L	0-56
Sept.	16	at Utah	L	16-54
Sept.	23	Utah State	L	10-61
Sept.	30	at UNLV	L	13-41
Oct.	7	Fresno State	L	10-27
Oct.	14	at Hawaii	L	26-37
Oct.	28	at BYU	L	20-41
Nov.	4	San Diego State	L	7-52
Nov.	11	at Nevada	L	14-59
Nov.	18	at Colorado State	L	14-42
Nov.	25	Wyoming	W	20-17

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. EJ Ane, DE, Yermo, CA
2. Max Barth, OT, Lodi, CA
3. Jermaine Braddock, WR, Covina, CA
4. Anthony Pardue, OT, Murrieta, CA
5. Junior Fehoko, LB, East Palo Alto, CA
6. Korey Mariboho, OT, Tustin, CA
7. Nehemiah Shelton, CB, Gardena, CA*
8. Dimitri Sakalia, DE, East Palo Alto, CA
9. Kairee Robinson, RB, Antioch, CA
10. Tre Jenkins, S, Stockton, CA

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MW	NATIONAL
Scoring	15.8 ppg	12	126
Rushing	120.1 ypg	11	112
Passing	198.0 ypg	7	87
Total	318.1 ypg	11	121
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	41.7 ppg	12	127
Rushing	285.4 ypg	12	129
Passing	213.9 ypg	7	51
Total	499.3 ypg	12	125
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
-26	-2.00	12	130

STAT CORNER

37

SJSU allowed 37 or more points in 10 of 12 games vs. FBS competition in 2017 and scored more than 20 points just twice.

OFFENSE New offensive coordinator Kevin McGiven has his hands full with his new assignment. The Spartans were 126th in the nation in scoring a year ago at 15.8 points per game, and while there is a decent amount of experience returning, there is no clear-cut quarterback entering fall camp. Montel Aaron started the season, lost his job midway through and then regained it in the latter part of the year. However, he had no touchdowns and seven interceptions in his final four games, so the job is still up for grabs. Josh Love, who had five starts last year, had a strong spring and threw the ball with improved accuracy, especially on deep balls. Redshirt freshman Terrell Carter, a dual threat, is also in the mix.

There is talent at the skill positions. Running back Tyler Nevens returns after leading the team with 670 yards as a true freshman. The top six pass catchers return, including tight end Josh Oliver, an All-MWC candidate. Tre Hartley and Bailey Gaither both averaged over 14 yards per catch, and Leki Nunn had a big spring game that featured five 30-plus-yard pass plays, an element that was missing in 2017.

The interior of the offensive line needs to be rebuilt, but tackles Troy Kowalski and Jack Snyder return.

DEFENSE San Jose State's defense was decimated by injuries last season but hopes to be at full strength and much improved in August. Twenty-four players overall sat out the spring, including seven linebackers.

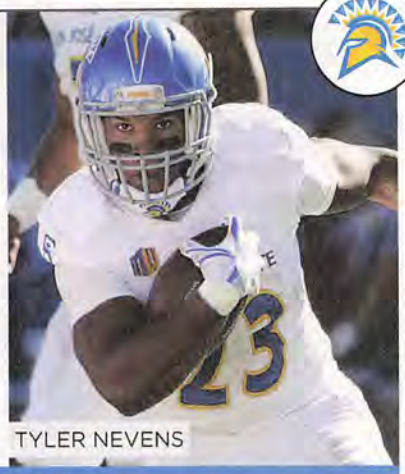
The defensive line welcomes back all three senior starters in the 3-4 alignment, although all three missed time due to injuries in 2017. If healthy, this group will be stout. Senior Bryson Bridges is an all-league candidate, and Owen Roberts and Sailosi Latu are also returning seniors who will be expected to present a solid first line of defense.

The aforementioned linebacker corps features a lot of moving parts, with the best player being inside linebacker Ethan Aguayo. Aguayo also missed time due to injury last year, but when healthy he complemented the departed Frank Ginda well. Ginda led the nation in tackles and declared for the NFL Draft as a junior. Jamal Scott had a strong spring at outside backer.

In the secondary, there will be a lot of inexperience with three starters gone, but some junior college transfers are fortifying the unit. Bobby Brown and Nehemiah Shelton will be in the mix to start right away, and Tre Webb was singled out by the staff as having had a strong spring. Senior Dakari Monroe is expected to keep his job at corner after starting two games late last year.

SPECIALISTS Placekicking is in excellent hands with Bryce Crawford, who has made 30-of-35 field goal attempts the last two seasons, including five from at least 50 yards. He was an All-MWC honorable mention in 2017. Brian Papazian is competing with Crawford for the punting duties, and that competition will continue into the fall.

FINAL ANALYSIS Erratic quarterback play and a plethora of injuries on defense torpedoed Brent Brennan's first season. Questions remain at quarterback, though the spring game offered some optimism with some successful deep balls and no interceptions in 35 attempts. Trepidation will linger until someone proves himself during games, although the skill positions offer promising talent. Defensively, there is optimism thanks to a strong defensive line and some young talent in the back eight. If the injury bug can stay away and a QB emerges, the Spartans can double their win total from a year ago.



TYLER NEVENS

"Still rebuilding across the board, but now they've got a core group of guys on that offense they can build around. There's talent, just not experience."

— An opposing MW assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)				
WR	9	**Justin Holmes (Sr.)**	10	Tre Walker (So.)
WR	11	**JaQuan Blackwell (So.)**	17	Leki Nunn (Fr.)
WR	15	**Tre Hartley (Sr.)**	84	Bailey Gaither (Jr.)
LT	79	**Troy Kowalski (Jr.)**	67	Korey Mariboho (Jr.)
LG	72	Jake Colman (Sr.)	57	Trevor Robbins (So.)
C	66	Dominic Fredrickson (Jr.)	56	Kyle Hoppe (So.)
RG	78	Jesse Chamberlain (Fr.)	70	Tyler Stevens (Fr.)
RT	55	**Jack Snyder (So.)**	78	Deano Motes (Jr.)
TE	89	**Josh Oliver (Sr.)**	81	Billy Humphreys (So.)
QB	12	Josh Love (Jr.)	7	**Montel Aaron (So.)**
RB	23	Tyler Nevens (So.)	20	Malike Roberson (Sr.)
DEFENSE (6)				
DE	9	**Bryson Bridges (Sr.)**	95	Cameron Alexander (So.)
NT	96	**Sailosi Latu (Sr.)**	77	Jamaar Hardy (Fr.)
DT	8	**Owen Roberts (Sr.)**	93	Sinjun Astani (So.)
OLB	42	**Jamal Scott (Sr.)**	41	Hadari Darden (Jr.)
ILB	31	**Ethan Aguayo (Jr.)**	45	Kyle Harmon (Fr.)
ILB	28	Tysyn Parker (So.)	37	Isaiah Ossai (Fr.)
OLB	53	Alii Matau (So.)	46	Sean Reifel (Sr.)
CB	19	Dakari Monroe (Sr.)	21	Jalen Nelson (So.)
CB	23	Nehemiah Shelton (So.)	24	Zamore Zigler (Jr.)
S	26	Tre Webb (So.)	27	**Jonathan Lenard Jr. (So.)**
S	14	Bobby Brown II (So.)	29	Cameron Smith (So.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	38	Bryce Crawford (Sr.)	**KR**	84 Bailey Gaither (Jr.)
P	49	Brian Papazian (Fr.)	**PR**	22 Thai Cottrell (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Montel Aaron, 225-126-1,531-10, 8 TDs
Rushing: Tyler Nevens, 163 att., 670 yds., 1 TD
Receiving: Tre Hartley, 37 rec., 527 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Ethan Aguayo, 84
Sacks: Jamal Scott, 3.0
Interceptions: Dakari Monroe, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Brent Brennan
Record at School: 2-11 (1 year)
Career Record: 2-11 (1 year)
Offensive Coordinator: Kevin McGiven
Defensive Coordinator: Derrick Odum
San Jose, CA • CEFCU Stadium (30,456)

Terrell Lloyd/San Jose State Athletics

UNLV Rebels

National Forecast: **100** • MW West Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **6-6, 4-4 MW**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at USC
Sept.	8	UTEP
Sept.	15	Prairie View A&M
Sept.	22	at Arkansas State
Oct.	6	New Mexico
Oct.	13	at Utah State
Oct.	20	Air Force
Oct.	27	at San Jose State
Nov.	3	Fresno State
Nov.	10	at San Diego State
Nov.	17	at Hawaii
Nov.	24	Nevada

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 4-4 MW

Sept.	2	Howard	L	40-43
Sept.	9	at Idaho	W	44-16
Sept.	23	at Ohio State	L	21-54
Sept.	30	San Jose State	W	41-13
Oct.	7	San Diego State	L	10-41
Oct.	14	at Air Force	L	30-34
Oct.	21	Utah State	L	28-52
Oct.	28	at Fresno State	W	26-16
Nov.	4	Hawaii	W	31-23
Nov.	10	BYU	L	21-31
Nov.	17	at New Mexico	W	38-35
Nov.	25	Nevada	L	16-23

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Kenyon Oblad, QB, Henderson, NV
2. Phillip Hill, S, Spring, TX
3. Moa Heimuli, DT, Salt Lake City, UT
4. Tyleek Collins, WR, Savannah, GA
5. Tim Mosley, DE, Los Angeles, CA
6. Bryan Catchings, OG, El Dorado Hills, CA
7. Max Gilliam, QB, Thousand Oaks, CA*
8. Chris Manoa, DT, Chandler, AZ
9. Malakai Salu, ILB, Portland, OR
10. Patrick Ballard, WR, Houston, TX

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	MW	NATIONAL
Scoring	28.8 ppg	6	61
Rushing	240.2 ypg	3	18
Passing	186.9 ypg	8	98
Total	427.1 ypg	2	41
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	31.8 ppg	7	93
Rushing	239.3 ypg	11	123
Passing	219.3 ypg	8	58
Total	458.7 ypg	9	114
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**MW**	**NATIONAL**
+4	+0.33	6	38

STAT CORNER

4.1

Though UNLV's offense improved to 6.2 yards per play (31st), the Rebels averaged just 4.1 points per trip inside the 40 (95th).

OFFENSE Quarterback Armani Rogers garnered Mountain West Freshman of the Year honors despite missing two games with a concussion, and his return gives the program some long overdue stability at a position that featured 11 different season-opening starters over a 14-year span. The 6'5", 225-pound Rogers was one of only five players in the nation to average at least 140 yards passing and 75 yards rushing per game last season — an elite group that also included 2016 Heisman Trophy winner Lamar Jackson, USF's Quinton Flowers, Nick Fitzgerald of Mississippi State and Arizona's Khalil Tate.

Rogers finished sixth in Mountain West in rushing (78.0 ypg) but was erratic throwing the ball, completing just 52.4 percent his passes and throwing almost as many interceptions (five) as touchdowns (six).

The Rebels, who finished 18th in the nation in rushing (240.2 ypg), should once again be potent on the ground thanks to the return of explosive senior Lexington Thomas, a first team All-MW pick who averaged 6.3 yards per carry and finished with 1,336 yards and 17 TDs. Sophomore Charles Williams and senior Xzaviar Campbell also return to provide good depth.

This group will run behind an offensive line led by right guard Justin Polu and right tackle Nathan Jacobson, both all-conference candidates.

Devonte Boyd must be replaced, but the wide receiver corps, led by senior Kendal Keys and juniors Darren Woods Jr. and Brandon Presley, is deep and experienced.

DEFENSE Tim Skipper, who spent the previous three years at Florida coaching linebackers and running backs, replaces Kent Baer as defensive coordinator and has his hands full. The Rebels allowed an average of 31.8 points and 458.7 yards per game and were especially bad on the ground (239.3 yards allowed per game, 123rd nationally). They struggled to get to the quarterback as well; only Air Force had fewer sacks nationally.

The good news is seven starters return, including linebackers Gabe McCoy and Bailey Laolagi and senior safety Dalton Baker, who led the team with 99 tackles. The bad news is the team's two best defenders, tackle Mike Hughes and corner Robert Jackson, both graduated.

Look for Skipper to insert more blitzing and exotic defensive packages to try force more turnovers on a defense that managed just seven interceptions.

SPECIALISTS Senior Evan Pantels, who was 17-of-22 on field goals and 28-of-28 on PATs despite battling a leg injury, returns to handle placekicking and punting, but he could be challenged by Utah transfer Hayes Hicken. Thomas, Presley, corner Jericho Flowers and sophomore wide receiver Mekhi Stevenson are among the players competing to jump-start a return game that averaged just 16.7 yards on kickoffs and 7.2 yards on punt returns.

FINAL ANALYSIS Tony Sanchez is just 12–24 in three seasons. Although his teams have won at least one more game each year, the Rebels still have yet to qualify for a bowl game; they lost at home as a 45-point favorite to Howard; and they have lost back-to-back games to in-state rival Nevada. With a favorable home schedule that includes non-conference games against UTEP and Prairie View A&M and a conference slate once again void of Mountain West heavyweight Boise State as well as Wyoming and Colorado State, the pressure will be on Sanchez to guide his team to a bowl game in 2018.



LEXINGTON THOMAS

"Everyone talked about the opening loss to Howard and forgot about them, but we saw a program headed in the right direction, especially on offense."

— An opposing MW assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	2	Mekhi Stevenson (So.)	82	Elijah Trosclair (So.)	
WR	84	**Kendal Keys (Sr.)**	10	Darren Woods Jr. (Jr.)	
WR	80	**Brandon Presley (Jr.)**	11	Drew Tejchman (So.)	
LT	73	Ashton Morgan (Fr.)	65	Donovan Outlaw (So.)	
LG	75	**Jaron Caldwell (Jr.)**	74	Julio Garcia (Jr.)	
C	70	Sid Acosta (Jr.)	51	Zach Singer (Sr.)	
RG	78	**Justin Polu (Jr.)**	74	Julio Garcia II (Jr.)	
RT	64	**Nathan Jacobson (Sr.)**	79	Daniel Schoene (Fr.)	
TE	45	Giovanni Fauolo (So.)	88	Cody Scherff (Sr.)	
QB	1	**Armani Rogers (So.)**	7	Kenyon Oblad (Fr.)	
RB	3	**Lexington Thomas (Sr.)**	8	Charles Williams (So.)	

DEFENSE (7)

DE	20	**Jameer Outsey (Sr.)**	98	Nick Dehdashtian (Jr.)
DT	42	Salanoa-Alo Wily (Sr.)		Montrice Johns (Jr.)
DT	94	Kolo Uasike (So.)		Tavis Malakius (So.)
DE	56	**Roger Mann (Sr.)**	97	Jamal Holloway (So.)
WLB	25	**Gabe McCoy (Jr.)**	54	Spencer Katoanga (Fr.)
MLB	48	**Bailey Laolagi (Sr.)**	53	**Farrell Hester II (So.)**
SLB	16	Javin White (Jr.)	44	Jacob Rominger (Sr.)
CB	7	**Jericho Flowers (Jr.)**	14	Myles Plummer (Jr.)
CB	26	Jocquez Kalili (Sr.)	38	Ty'Jason Roberts (Jr.)
SS	23	Greg Francis (So.)	22	Demitrious Gibbs (Jr.)
FS	33	**Dalton Baker (Sr.)**	17	Evan Austrie (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	30	Evan Pantels (Sr.)	KR	3	Lexington Thomas (Sr.)
P	30	Evan Pantels (Sr.)	PR	7	Jericho Flowers (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Armani Rogers, 189-99-1,471-5, 6 TDs
Rushing: Lexington Thomas, 211 att., 1,336 yds., 17 TDs
Receiving: Brandon Presley, 34 rec., 552 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: Dalton Baker, 99
Sacks: Jameer Outsey, Nick Dehdashtian, 2.0
Interceptions: Jericho Flowers, 2; Javin White, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Tony Sanchez
Record at School: 12-24 (3 years)
Career Record: 12-24 (3 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Barney Cotton
Defensive Coordinator: Tim Skipper
Las Vegas, NV • Sam Boyd Stadium (36,500)

IIA Photography/UNLV

PAC-12 PREVIEW

North	Predicted Order of Finish	South
	**1** WASHINGTON **HUSKIES** 11-2, 8-1 Pac-12	**1** USC **TROJANS** 9-4, 7-2 Pac-12 
	**2** STANFORD **CARDINAL** 8-4, 6-3 Pac-12	**2** UTAH **UTES** 8-4, 5-4 Pac-12 
	**3** OREGON **DUCKS** 8-4, 5-4 Pac-12	**3** ARIZONA **WILDCATS** 8-4, 5-4 Pac-12 
	**4** CALIFORNIA **GOLDEN BEARS** 7-5, 4-5 Pac-12	**4** UCLA **BRUINS** 6-6, 4-5 Pac-12 
	**5** WASH. STATE **COUGARS** 6-6, 3-6 Pac-12	**5** COLORADO **BUFFALOES** 6-6, 4-5 Pac-12 
	**6** OREGON STATE **BEAVERS** 2-10, 0-9 Pac-12	**6** ARIZONA STATE **SUN DEVILS** 5-7, 3-6 Pac-12 

Pac-12 Championship: **Washington over USC**

GAMES TO WATCH

SEPT. 1
WASHINGTON VS. AUBURN
Washington gets a great opportunity to set the tone in Week 1 against an SEC power at Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta.

SEPT. 8
MICHIGAN ST. AT ARIZONA ST.
It's the first big game of the Herm Edwards era in Tempe as Michigan State makes a rare regular-season trip out West.

SEPT. 8
USC AT STANFORD
USC swept the Cardinal in 2017, winning 42–24 at the Coliseum and 31–28 in Santa Clara in the Pac-12 Championship Game.

SEPT. 8
UCLA AT OKLAHOMA
It's a matchup between two of the top offensive coaches in the game — UCLA's Chip Kelly and Oklahoma's Lincoln Riley.

SEPT. 22
STANFORD AT OREGON
It's the Pac-12 opener for new Oregon boss Mario Cristobal. Stanford has won the last two in this series by a combined score of 101–34.

OCT. 13
WASHINGTON AT OREGON
Oregon won 12 straight in the series from 2004-15, but Chris Petersen and the Huskies have reclaimed ownership of this underrated rivalry.

Browning: Craig Mitchelldyer; Love, Robertson, Smith, Tate, Phillips, Montez, Wilkins: Peter Brouillet; Herbert, Thompson, Luton, Huntley, Moss, McGary: AP

2018 Unit Rankings

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
ARIZONA	1	6	6	6	8	5	6
ARIZONA STATE	5	9	1	8	5	9	11
CALIFORNIA	9	7	2	7	9	10	10
COLORADO	8	11	9	12	11	11	9
OREGON	3	5	8	4	3	2	7
OREGON STATE	12	12	12	10	12	12	12
STANFORD	6	1	4	1	7	4	8
UCLA	10	8	10	11	10	8	4
USC	7	4	3	3	2	1	3
UTAH	4	3	11	5	4	6	2
WASHINGTON	2	2	7	2	1	3	1
WASHINGTON STATE	11	10	5	9	6	7	5

Recruiting by School

1. USC
2. Washington
3. Oregon
4. UCLA
5. Utah
6. Arizona State
7. Stanford
8. California
9. Washington State
10. Colorado
11. Arizona
12. Oregon State


KALEB MCGARY, WASHINGTON


ZACK MOSS, UTAH

2018 Bowl Projections

Rose Bowl: Washington vs. Michigan
Alamo Bowl: USC vs. West Virginia
Holiday Bowl: Stanford vs. Iowa
Sun Bowl: Arizona vs. Louisville
Cactus: Utah vs. Iowa State
Foster Farms Bowl: Oregon vs. Northwestern
Las Vegas Bowl: California vs. San Diego State
Birmingham Bowl: UCLA vs. UCF

Pac-12 Coordinator Carousel

Arizona: Offense
New: Noel Mazzone
Old: Calvin Magee, Rod Smith

Arizona State: Offense
New: Rob Likens
Old: Rob Likens, Billy Napier

Arizona State: Defense
New: Danny Gonzales
Old: Phil Bennett

Colorado: Offense
New: Klayton Adams, Darrin Chiaverini
Old: Darren Chiaverini, Brian Lindgren

Oregon: Offense
New: Marcus Arroyo
Old: Marcus Arroyo, Mario Cristobal

Oregon State: Offense
New: Brian Lindgren
Old: Kevin McGiven

Oregon State: Defense
New: Tim Tibesar
Old: Kevin Clune

Stanford: Offense
New: Tavita Pritchard
Old: Mike Bloomgren

UCLA: Offense
New: Chip Kelly
Old: Jedd Fisch

UCLA: Defense
New: Jerry Azzinaro
Old: Tom Bradley

Washington: Offense
New: Bush Hamdan, Matt Lubick
Old: Matt Lubick, Jonathan Smith

Washington State: Defense
New: Tracy Claeys
Old: Alex Grinch

NOV. 3
UCLA AT OREGON
Chip Kelly makes his anticipated return to Autzen Stadium, where he went 26–2 as the Ducks' head coach from 2009-12.

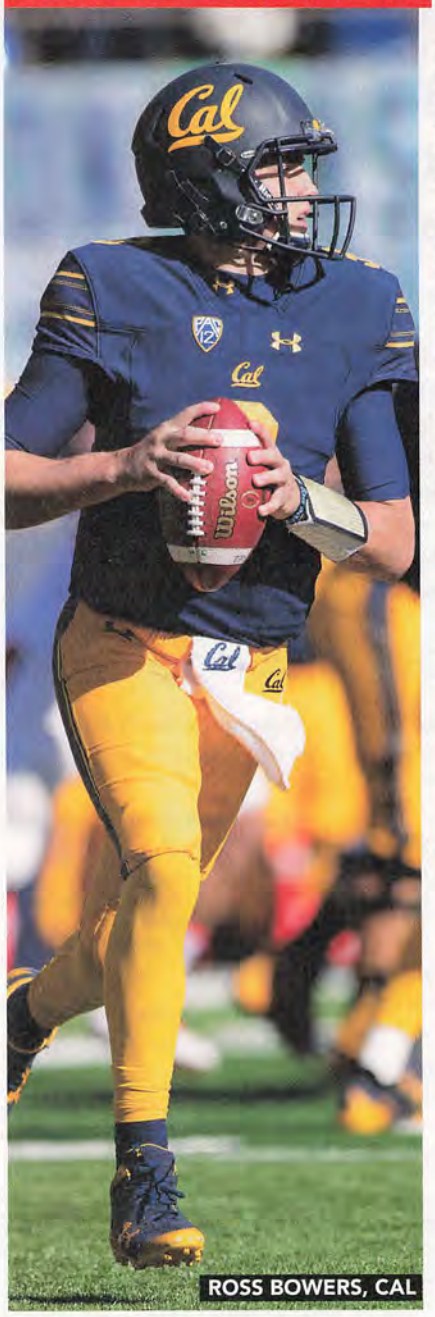
NOV. 3
STANFORD AT WASHINGTON
The winner of this game has played in the Pac-12 Championship Game in each of the last three years — Stanford in 2015 and '17 and UW in '16.

NOV. 17
USC AT UCLA
The Chip Kelly hire has energized the UCLA program. You know what else would help? A decisive win over the hated rivals from USC.

NOV. 23
OREGON AT OREGON STATE
New Oregon State coach Jonathan Smith went 2–2 in four Civil War starts as the Beavers' starting quarterback from 1998-2001.

NOV. 23
WASHINGTON AT WASHINGTON ST.
The Huskies have won five straight and eight of nine in the Apple Cup, with all but one of the victories coming by 10 points or more.

NOV. 24
ARIZONA STATE AT ARIZONA
A pair of first-year coaches will be eager to record a win in their first Territorial Cup showdown. The home team has won five straight.


ROSS BOWERS, CAL

Pac-12 Returning Leaders

Passing	ATT	COMP	PCT	YDS	TD	INT	AVG/G
Ross Bowers, California	461	272	59.0	3,039	18	12	253.3
Manny Wilkins, Arizona State	410	260	63.4	3,270	20	8	251.5
Steven Montez, Colorado	377	228	60.5	2,975	18	9	247.9

Rushing	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Bryce Love, Stanford	263	2,118	8.1	19	75	162.9
Khalil Tate, Arizona	153	1,411	9.2	12	82	128.3
Myles Gaskin, Washington	222	1,380	6.2	21	69	106.2

Receiving	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
N'Keal Harry, Arizona State	82	1,142	13.9	8	70	87.8
Vic Wharton III, California	67	871	13.0	5	67	72.6
Kanawai Noa, California	56	788	14.1	4	75	71.6

Tackles: Christian Sam, Arizona State (127); Cameron Smith, USC (112)
Sacks: Kylan Wilborn, Arizona (7.5); Christian Rector, USC (7.5)
Interceptions: Lorenzo Burns, Stanford (5), Three players tied with 4

2017 Pac-12 Standings

NORTH	PAC-12	OVERALL	SOUTH	PAC-12	OVERALL
Stanford	7-2	9-5	USC	8-1	11-3
Washington	7-2	10-3	Arizona State	6-3	7-6
Washington State	6-3	9-4	Arizona	5-4	7-6
Oregon	4-5	7-6	UCLA	4-5	6-7
California	2-7	5-7	Utah	3-6	7-6
Oregon State	0-9	1-11	Colorado	2-7	5-7

2017 Bowl Results

Las Vegas Bowl: Boise State 38, Oregon 28
Heart of Dallas Bowl: Utah 30, West Virginia 14
Cactus Bowl: Kansas State 35, UCLA 17
Foster Farms Bowl: Purdue 38, Arizona 35
Alamo Bowl: TCU 39, Stanford 37
Holiday Bowl: Michigan State 42, Washington State 17
Sun Bowl: NC State 52, Arizona State 31
Cotton Bowl Classic: Ohio State 24, USC 7
Fiesta Bowl: Penn State 35, Washington 28

2017 PAC-12 TEAM STATS & RANKINGS

OFFENSE

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
ARIZONA	41.3 (1)	309.3 (1)	180.2 (12)	489.5 (1)
ARIZONA STATE	31.8 (7)	175.5 (6)	255.7 (6)	431.2 (6)
CALIFORNIA	27.8 (10)	125.6 (10)	258.9 (5)	384.5 (11)
COLORADO	26.4 (11)	157.2 (8)	260.4 (4)	417.6 (7)
OREGON	36.0 (3)	251.0 (2)	189.9 (10)	440.9 (4)
OREGON STATE	20.7 (12)	137.5 (9)	196.3 (9)	333.8 (12)
STANFORD	32.4 (6)	202.4 (3)	186.3 (11)	388.6 (10)
UCLA	32.5 (5)	113.4 (11)	344.5 (2)	457.8 (3)
USC	32.6 (4)	185.1 (4)	299.0 (3)	484.1 (2)
UTAH	29.5 (9)	164.0 (7)	249.4 (7)	413.4 (8)
WASHINGTON	36.2 (2)	183.2 (5)	222.2 (8)	405.5 (9)
WASHINGTON STATE	30.3 (8)	68.0 (12)	366.8 (1)	434.8 (5)

DEFENSE

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
ARIZONA	34.4 (!0)	185.1 (9)	286.1 (12)	471.2 (10)
ARIZONA STATE	32.8 (9)	174.8 (8)	274.9 (11)	449.7 (8)
CALIFORNIA	28.4 (7)	164.1 (6)	265.8 (10)	429.9 (7)
COLORADO	28.2 (6)	208.0 (10)	242.6 (9)	450.6 (9)
OREGON	29.0 (8)	128.5 (2)	240.6 (8)	369.2 (4)
OREGON STATE	43.0 (12)	2335.8 (11)	237.3 (7)	473.1 (11)
STANFORD	22.7 (2)	169.0 (7)	236.1 (5)	405.1 (6)
UCLA	36.6 (11)	287.4 (12)	196.3 (2)	483.7 (12)
USC	26.1 (5)	158.6 (5)	237.0 (6)	395.6 (5)
UTAH	23.2 (3)	131.3 (3)	207.1 (4)	338.4 (3)
WASHINGTON	16.1 (1)	100.9 (1)	197.2 (3)	298.0 (1)
WASHINGTON STATE	25.8 (4)	152.4 (4)	170.9 (1)	323.3 (2)

All-Pac-12 Team

First-Team Offense

QB	Khalil Tate	6-2	215	Jr.	Arizona
RB	Bryce Love	5-10	196	Sr.	Stanford
RB	Zack Moss	5-10	217	Jr.	Utah
AP	Myles Gaskin	5-10	191	Sr.	Washington
WR	N'Keal Harry	6-4	213	Jr.	Arizona State
WR	JJ Arcega-Whiteside	6-3	221	Sr.	Stanford
TE	Kaden Smith	6-5	253	Jr.	Stanford
C	Toa Lobendahn	6-3	290	Sr.	USC
OL	Trey Adams	6-8	331	Sr.	Washington
OL	Nate Herbig	6-4	348	Jr.	Stanford
OL	Kaleb McGary	6-8	325	Sr.	Washington
OL	Calvin Throckmorton	6-5	316	Jr.	Oregon


BOBBY OKEREKE, STANFORD


N'KEAL HARRY, ARIZONA STATE

First-Team Defense

DL	Greg Gaines	6-2	313	Sr.	Washington
DL	Jalen Jelks	6-6	246	Sr.	Oregon
DL	Christian Rector	6-4	275	Jr.	USC
LB	Ben Burr-Kirven	6-0	221	Sr.	Washington
LB	Troy Dye	6-4	221	Jr.	Oregon
LB	Bobby Okereke	6-3	232	Sr.	Stanford
LB	Cameron Smith	6-2	250	Sr.	USC
CB	Julian Blackmon	6-1	190	Jr.	Utah
CB	Byron Murphy	5-11	184	So.	Washington
S	Taylor Rapp	6-0	207	Jr.	Washington
S	Marvell Tell	6-2	275	Sr.	USC

First-Team Specialists

K	Matt Gay	6-0	230	Sr.	Utah
P	Mitch Wishnowsky	6-2	220	Sr.	Utah
KR	Cameron Scarlett	6-1	214	Sr.	Stanford
PR	Shun Brown	5-10	177	Sr.	Arizona

SECOND-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	Jake Browning	6-2	206	Sr.	Washington
RB	Tony Brooks-James	5-9	185	Sr.	Oregon
RB	Patrick Laird	6-0	205	Sr.	California
AP	Stephen Carr	6-0	210	So.	USC
WR	Demetris Robertson	6-0	185	So.	California
WR	Tyler Vaughns	6-2	185	So.	USC
TE	Caleb Wilson	6-4	235	Jr.	UCLA
C	Jake Hanson	6-5	298	Jr.	Oregon
OL	Andre Dillard	6-5	305	Sr.	Washington State
OL	Nathan Eldridge	6-3	297	Jr.	Arizona
OL	Walker Little	6-7	317	So.	Stanford
OL	Patrick Mekari	6-4	320	Sr.	California

SECOND-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	Bradlee Anae	6-3	254	Jr.	Utah
DL	Jordon Scott	6-1	336	So.	Oregon
DL	Leki Fotu	6-5	323	Jr.	Utah
LB	Kylan Wilborn	6-2	245	So.	Arizona
LB	Colin Schooler	6-0	226	So.	Arizona
LB	Chase Hansen	6-3	230	Sr.	Utah
LB	Peyton Pelluer	6-0	225	Sr.	Washington State
CB	Iman Marshall	6-1	205	Sr.	USC
CB	Chase Lucas	6-0	175	So.	Arizona State
S	JoJo McIntosh	6-1	211	Sr.	Washington
S	Jalen Thompson	6-0	185	Jr.	Washington State

SECOND-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	Jet Toner	6-4	201	Jr.	Stanford
P	Jake Bailey	6-2	188	Sr.	Stanford
KR	Velus Jones	6-0	190	So.	USC
PR	Dillon Mitchell	6-1	188	Jr.	Oregon


Patrick Laird
California


Andre James
UCLA


Chase Lucas
Arizona State


Velus Jones
USC

THIRD-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	Justin Herbert	6-6	231	Jr.	Oregon
RB	Eno Benjamin	5-11	201	So.	Arizona State
RB	J.J. Taylor	5-6	180	So.	Arizona
AP	James Williams	6-0	200	Jr.	Washington State
WR	Davontavean Martin	6-3	185	So.	Washington State
WR	Dillon Mitchell	6-1	188	Jr.	Oregon
TE	Hunter Bryant	6-2	245	So.	Washington
C	Jesse Burkett	6-4	309	Sr.	Stanford
OL	Chuma Edoga	6-4	295	Sr.	USC
OL	Lo Falemaka	6-5	295	Sr.	Utah
OL	Layth Friekh	6-5	302	Sr.	Arizona
OL	Andre James	6-4	310	Jr.	UCLA

THIRD-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	Koron Crump	6-3	215	Sr.	Arizona State
DL	Porter Gustin	6-5	255	Sr.	USC
DL	Nnamdi Oguayo	6-3	240	Jr.	Washington State
LB	Rick Gamboa	6-0	240	Sr.	Colorado
LB	Jaelan Phillips	6-5	255	So.	UCLA
LB	Jordan Kunaszyk	6-3	235	Sr.	California
LB	Jonathan Willis	6-1	232	Sr.	Oregon State
CB	Nate Meadors	5-11	195	Sr.	UCLA
CB	Jace Whittaker	5-11	182	Sr.	Arizona
S	Adarius Pickett	5-11	195	Sr.	UCLA
S	Evan Worthington	6-2	205	Sr.	Colorado

THIRD-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	James Stefanou	6-1	195	So.	Colorado
P	Alex Kinney	6-1	205	Sr.	Colorado
KR	Tony Brooks-James	5-9	185	Sr.	Oregon
PR	Vic Wharton	5-11	190	Sr.	California

Peter Brouillet

California **Golden Bears**

National Forecast: **49** • Pac-12 North Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **7-5, 4-5 Pac-12**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	North Carolina
Sept.	8	at BYU
Sept.	15	Idaho State
Sept.	29	Oregon
Oct.	6	at Arizona
Oct.	13	UCLA
Oct.	20	at Oregon State
Oct.	27	Washington
Nov.	3	at Washington State
Nov.	10	at USC
Nov.	17	Stanford
Nov.	24	Colorado

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 2-7 PAC-12

Sept.	2	at North Carolina	W	35-30
Sept.	9	Weber State	W	33-20
Sept.	16	Ole Miss	W	27-16
Sept.	23	USC	L	20-30
Sept.	30	at Oregon	L	24-45
Oct.	7	at Washington	L	7-38
Oct.	13	Washington State	W	37-3
Oct.	21	Arizona (ot)	L	44-45
Oct.	28	at Colorado	L	28-44
Nov.	4	Oregon State	W	37-23
Nov.	18	at Stanford	L	14-17
Nov.	24	at UCLA	L	27-30

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Will Craig, OT, Granite Bay, CA
2. Nikko Remigio, WR, Orange, CA
3. McCallan Castles, TE, South Lake Tahoe, CA
4. Christopher Brown, RB, Oceanside, CA
5. Chigozie Anusiem, S, La Habra, CA
6. Johnny Adams, RB, Indianapolis, IN
7. Aaron Maldonado, DT, La Puente, CA
8. Joseph Ogunbanjo, OLB, Houston, TX
9. Evan Tattersall, OLB, Granite Bay, CA
10. Lone Toailoa, DE, Auckland, NZ*

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	PAC-12	NATIONAL
Scoring	27.8 ppg	10	71
Rushing	125.6 ypg	10	109
Passing	258.9 ypg	5	40
Total	384.5 ypg	11	90
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	28.4 ppg	7	78
Rushing	164.1 ypg	6	64
Passing	265.8 ypg	10	113
Total	429.9 ypg	7	96
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
+4	+0.33	3	38

STAT CORNER

-14.2

In Justin Wilcox's first season, Cal cut 14.2 points per game from its scoring defense. Of course, the offense fell by 9.3, too.

OFFENSE The Bears' offense returns nearly intact from a year ago but is determined to improve this fall. Junior quarterback Ross Bowers, who passed for 3,039 yards with 18 touchdowns last season, is expected to duel South Carolina transfer Brandon McIlwain through fall camp for the starting job. McIlwain provides an extra element with his running ability, but Bowers has a better grasp of the Cal offense.

Former walk-on Patrick Laird was the team's most pleasant surprise a year ago, rushing for 1,127 yards and eight touchdowns and catching 45 passes for 322 yards and another score after replacing injured starter Tre Watson in Week 3. Beyond Laird, the Bears have virtually no experience at the position after Watson and two backups transferred in the offseason. Freshmen Johnny Adams Jr. and Christopher Brown Jr. both will get the chance to play early.

Receiver should be a strength. Back is Demetris Robertson, a Freshman All-American in 2016 who played just two games last season before undergoing surgery to repair a sports hernia. Robertson will complement Kanawai Noa and Vic Wharton, who combined for 123 catches and nine TDs a year ago.

All five offensive line starters are back, led by seniors Addison Ooms at center and Patrick Mekari at left tackle, but the Bears need more consistency up front. Cal was 11th in the Pac-12 in total offense.

DEFENSE Cal's scoring defense ranked seventh in the Pac-12, allowing 28.4 points per game a year ago, a huge improvement from 42.6 points per game the year before and the Bears' best mark in six seasons. But there were major losses in the front seven. "Can we hold up up front with a bunch of guys who don't have a lot of playing time? That's one of the questions we have to face," defensive coordinator Tim DeRuyter says.

Senior Chris Palmer figures to anchor the line at nose guard, but ends Luc Bequette and Rusty Becker can also slide inside. Senior insider linebacker Jordan Kunaszyk finished strong last season to wind up as the team's leading tackler (74) and should again be the unit's most productive player. Outside linebacker Alex Funches, the team's best pass rusher, will try to spark greater pressure on opposing quarterbacks.

The secondary should be the strength of the defense, led by sophomore cornerbacks Cam Bynum and Elijah Hicks. "They didn't play like freshmen," DeRuyter says. Ashtyn Davis, a hurdler on the track team and the fastest player on the football roster, is set at free safety after starting the final six games last season.

SPECIALISTS Gabe Siemieniec and Chris Landgrebe will compete through August for the placekicker job held the past three seasons by Cal career scoring leader Matt Anderson. There is more clarity at punter, where Steven Coutts is set to replace Dylan Klumph.

FINAL ANALYSIS The arc of the Cal program is headed in a positive direction, but second-year coach Justin Wilcox knows the Bears aren't where they need to be. "It's not good enough. We can say we have all these returnees, but we were 5–7," he says. "Every one of us has got to show improvement."

A year ago, the Bears dramatically improved the Pac-12's worst defense and inched close to bowl eligibility. But the stretch run was a study in frustrating close calls, a 1–4 finish that included three losses by a combined seven points. "Those are the margins that are toughest to overcome," Wilcox says. That will remain Cal's challenge in the tough Pac-12 North.



DEMETRIS ROBERTSON

"They looked better in every phase on defense last season; they just didn't have the depth against the better teams in the conference."

— An opposing Pac-12 assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (10)

WR	8	Demetris Robertson (So.)	2	Jordan Duncan (Jr.)	
WR	9	**Kanawai Noa (Jr.)**	10	Jeremiah Hawkins (So.)	
WR	17	**Vic Wharton III (Sr.)**	88	Taariq Johnson (Fr.)	
LT	79	**Patrick Mekari (Sr.)**	67	Matt Robinson (Jr.)	
LG	72	**Kamryn Bennett (Sr.)**	64	Gentle Williams (So.)	
C	57	**Addison Ooms (Sr.)**	74	Ryan Gibson (Jr.)	
RG	61	**Valentino Daltoso (So.)**	53	Michael Saffell (So.)	
RT	71	**Jake Curhan (So.)**	76	Henry Bazakas (Jr.)	
TE	99	**Malik McMorris (Sr.)**	11	Ray Hudson (Sr.)	
QB	3	**Ross Bowers (Jr.)**	5	Brandon McIlwain (So.)	
RB	28	**Patrick Laird (Sr.)**	33	Derrick Clark (So.)	

DEFENSE (7)

DE	93	**Luc Bequette (Jr.)**	91	Chinedu Udeogu (So.)	
NG	98	Chris Palmer (Sr.)	99	Siulagisipai Fuimaono (Fr.)	
DE	90	Rusty Becker (Sr.)	44	Zeandae Johnson (Jr.)	
OLB	19	**Cameron Goode (So.)**	23	Malik Psalms (Jr.)	
ILB	59	Jordan Kunaszyk (Sr.)	89	Evan Weaver (Jr.)	
ILB	41	Gerran Brown (Jr.)	4	Derron Brown (Sr.)	
OLB	36	**Alex Funches (Sr.)**	13	Russ Ude (Jr.)	
CB	24	**Camryn Bynum (So.)**	20	Josh Drayden (Jr.)	
CB	3	**Elijah Hicks (So.)**	45	Branden Smith (Fr.)	
S	27	**Ashtyn Davis (Jr.)**	28	Quentin Tartabull (Sr.)	
S	6	**Jaylinn Hawkins (Jr.)**	5	Trey Turner III (Jr.)	

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	46	Gabe Siemieniec (So.)	**KR**	27	Ashtyn Davis (Jr.)
P	37	Steven Coutts (Jr.)	**PR**	17	Vic Wharton III (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Ross Bowers, 461-272-3,039-12, 18 TDs
Rushing: Patrick Laird, 191 att., 1,127 yds., 8 TDs
Receiving: Vic Wharton III, 67 rec., 871 yds., 5 TDs
Tackles: Jordan Kunaszyk, 74
Sacks: Alex Funches, 4.0
Interceptions: Camryn Bynum, Jordan Kunaszyk, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Justin Wilcox
Record at School: 5-7 (1 year)
Career Record: 5-7 (1 year)
Offensive Coordinator: Beau Baldwin
Defensive Coordinator: Tim DeRuyter
Berkeley, CA • Memorial Stadium (62,467)

Peter Brouillet

Oregon **Ducks**

National Forecast: **23** • Pac-12 North Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **8-4, 5-4 Pac-12**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Bowling Green
Sept.	8	Portland State
Sept.	15	San Jose State
Sept.	22	Stanford
Sept.	29	at California
Oct.	13	Washington
Oct.	20	at Washington State
Oct.	27	at Arizona
Nov.	3	UCLA
Nov.	10	at Utah
Nov.	17	Arizona State
Nov.	23	at Oregon State

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 4-5 PAC-12

Sept.	2	Southern Utah	W	77-21
Sept.	9	Nebraska	W	42-35
Sept.	16	at Wyoming	W	49-13
Sept.	23	at Arizona State	L	35-37
Sept.	30	California	W	45-24
Oct.	7	Washington State	L	10-33
Oct.	14	at Stanford	L	7-49
Oct.	21	at UCLA	L	14-31
Oct.	28	Utah	W	41-20
Nov.	4	at Washington	L	3-38
Nov.	18	Arizona	W	48-28
Nov.	25	Oregon State	W	69-10
Dec.	16	vs. Boise State #	L	28-38

#Las Vegas Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Penei Sewell, OG, Saint George, UT
2. Jalen Hall, WR, Los Angeles, CA
3. Steve Stephens, S, Fresno, CA
4. Tyler Shough, QB, Chandler, AZ
5. Jevon Holland, S, Pleasanton, CA
6. Adrian Jackson, OLB, Denver, CO
7. Isaah Crocker, WR, Sacramento, CA
8. Spencer Webb, TE, Sacramento, CA
9. Steven Jones, OG, Temecula, CA
10. Dawson Jaramillo, OT, Portland, OR

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	PAC-12	NATIONAL
Scoring	36.0 ppg	3	18
Rushing	251.0 ypg	2	12
Passing	189.9 ypg	10	94
Total	440.9 ypg	4	30
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	29.0 ppg	8	81
Rushing	128.5 ypg	2	25
Passing	240.6 ypg	8	88
Total	369.2 ypg	4	46
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
0	0.00	7	64

STAT CORNER

5.1

Oregon went from allowing 6.4 yards per play (115th in FBS) to 5.1 in 2017 (28th), the largest improvement in the Power 5.

AP

OFFENSE Just four years after Marcus Mariota won the first Heisman Trophy in Oregon's history, the Ducks have another candidate in junior quarterback Justin Herbert. In the seven regular-season games he played in 2017, Oregon went 6–1 and averaged 52.1 points. In the five he missed, the Ducks were 1–4 and averaged 15.0 points. While not as athletic as Mariota, Eugene native Herbert is every bit the pocket passer.

He'll set up behind a line that returns three full-time starters and added a class of incoming freshmen that includes four newcomers weighing at least 330 pounds — indicating the direction new head coach Mario Cristobal wants to take the offense. At least one, guard Penei Sewell, could crack the lineup this fall.

The backfield is deep, headlined by senior Tony Brooks-James — who has a national championship ring from his days as a sprinter on the track team — and powerful little redshirt freshman CJ Verdell, who calls to mind former UO back LaMichael James.

The question mark is the receiving corps. Tight end Jacob Breeland is Herbert's favorite target, and there are a couple of other dependable returners in junior wideouts Dillon Mitchell and Brenden Schooler. But the group lacks star power, unless second-year guys Johnny Johnson and Daewood Davis can make big jumps after encouraging springs.

DEFENSE Two-time team Defensive MVP Troy Dye is an emerging star at inside linebacker who blossomed in coordinator Jim Leavitt's first season, and looks to take another step after Leavitt chose to remain in Eugene under Cristobal. "It's pretty cool to be out there and know what I'm doing," Dye says.

There are talented edge players in outside linebackers Justin Hollins and La'Mar Winston, plus defensive end Jalen Jelks, who flirted with the idea of the NFL Draft after recording 15 tackles for a loss as a junior.

The sophomore class will be leaned on heavily — linemen Jordon Scott and Austin Faoliu are returning starters, and the class of 2017 also brought both cornerbacks, Thomas Graham and Deommodore Lenoir. There's little experience behind either duo, however, and middle linebacker was a revolving door in the spring. The Ducks do have some depth at safety, headlined by converted cornerback Ugochukwu Amadi. "He's like a quarterback for the defense," Cristobal says of Amadi.

SPECIALISTS The Ducks lost a dependable placekicker in Aidan Schneider. To replace him, they'll turn to sophomore Adam Stack, who will do double duty after punting as a freshman last season. All-America long snapper Tanner Carew was the only player at his position invited to the NFL Scouting Combine, and the Ducks signed freshman Karsten Battles to replace him.

FINAL ANALYSIS The schedule sets up for a return to contention in the Pac-12 North. After three bland non-conference matchups — the Ducks can thank Texas A&M for backing out of a contracted series — Oregon hosts Washington and Stanford in conference play. With Herbert and Brooks-James in the backfield, and experience up front, the offense should be able to put up points. History says the defense in its second year under Leavitt will take another step forward. But will it be enough to get Oregon back to double-digit wins and Pac-12 title contention? The Ducks haven't won a bowl game since the 2014 CFB Playoff semifinal, a streak fans badly want to see end.



JUSTIN HERBERT

"(DC) Jim Leavitt coming back is good for them. He can find ways to compensate where they're thin; that's what makes him a good coordinator."

— An opposing Pac-12 assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	13	**Dillon Mitchell (Jr.)**	30	Jaylon Redd (So.)
WR	86	Brenden Schooler (Jr.)	14	Demetri Burch (So.)
WR	80	**Johnny Johnson (So.)**	81	Daewood Davis (Fr.)
LT	66	Brady Aiello (Jr.)	60	Logan Bathke (So.)
LG	68	**Shane Lemieux (Jr.)**		Steven Jones (Fr.)
C	55	**Jake Hanson (Jr.)**	78	Alex Forsyth (Fr.)
RG	54	**Calvin Throckmorton (Jr.)**		Penei Sewell (Fr.)
RT	77	George Moore (Jr.)	71	Jacob Capra (So.)
TE	27	**Jacob Breeland (Jr.)**	84	Cam McCormick (So.)
QB	10	**Justin Herbert (Jr.)**	12	Tyler Shough (Fr.)
RB	20	Tony Brooks-James (Sr.)	25	CJ Verdell (Fr.)

DEFENSE (7)

DE	99	Austin Faoliu (So.)	90	Drayton Carlberg (Jr.)
DT	34	**Jordon Scott (So.)**	51	Gary Baker (Jr.)
DE	97	**Jalen Jelks (Sr.)**	44	D.J. Johnson, (So.)
OLB	11	**Justin Hollins (Sr.)**	56	Bryson Young (Jr.)
ILB	35	**Troy Dye (Jr.)**	24	Keith Simms (So.)
ILB	39	Kaulana Apelu (Sr.)	12	Sampson Niu (So.)
OLB	32	**La'Mar Winston (Jr.)**	19	Fotu Leiato (Sr.)
CB	4	**Thomas Graham (So.)**	23	Verone McKinley (Fr.)
CB	15	Deommodore Lenoir (So.)	14	Haki Woods (Jr.)
S	7	**Ugochukwu Amadi (Sr.)**	25	Brady Breeze (So.)
S	16	Nick Pickett (So.)	21	Mattrell McGraw (Sr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	96	Adam Stack (So.)	KR	13	Dillon Mitchell (Jr.)
P	96	Adam Stack (So.)	PR	20	Tony Brooks-James (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Justin Herbert, 206-139-1,983-5, 15 TDs
Rushing: Tony Brooks-James, 93 att., 498 yds., 2 TDs
Receiving: Dillon Mitchell, 42 rec., 517 yds., 4 TDs
Tackles: Troy Dye, 107
Sacks: Jalen Jelks, 6.5
Interceptions: Ugochukwu Amadi, 3; Thomas Graham, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mario Cristobal
Record at School: 0-1 (1 game)
Career Record: 27-48 (6+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Marcus Arroyo
Defensive Coordinator: Jim Leavitt
Eugene, OR • Autzen Stadium (54,000)

Oregon State **Beavers**

National Forecast: **102** • Pac-12 North Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **2-10, 0-9 Pac-12**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at Ohio State
Sept.	8	Southern Utah
Sept.	15	at Nevada
Sept.	22	Arizona
Sept.	29	at Arizona State
Oct.	6	Washington State
Oct.	20	California
Oct.	27	at Colorado
Nov.	3	USC
Nov.	10	at Stanford
Nov.	17	at Washington
Nov.	23	Oregon

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 1-11, 0-9 PAC-12

Aug.	26	at Colorado State	L	27-58
Sept.	2	Portland State	W	35-32
Sept.	9	Minnesota	L	14-48
Sept.	16	at Washington State	L	23-52
Sept.	30	Washington	L	7-42
Oct.	7	at USC	L	10-38
Oct.	14	Colorado	L	33-36
Oct.	26	Stanford	L	14-15
Nov.	4	at California	L	23-37
Nov.	11	at Arizona	L	28-49
Nov.	18	Arizona State	L	24-40
Nov.	25	at Oregon	L	10-69

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Jermar Jefferson, RB, Harbor City, CA
2. Joshua Gray, OT, Rancho Cucamonga CA
3. Matthew Tago, OLB, Palmdale, CA
4. Isaac Hodgins, DT, Oakland, CA
5. Isaiah Smalls, TE, Los Angeles, CA
6. Jake Dukart, QB, Lake Oswego, OR
7. DeShon Wilson, CB, Hayward, CA
8. Jake Levengood, OG, Vacaville, CA
9. Jack Colletto, QB, Camas, WA*
10. Jeromy Reichner, DT, Philadelphia, PA*

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	PAC-12	NATIONAL
Scoring	20.7 ppg	12	114
Rushing	137.5 ypg	9	98
Passing	196.3 ypg	9	88
Total	333.8 ypg	12	113
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	43.0 ppg	12	128
Rushing	235.8 ypg	11	121
Passing	237.3 ypg	7	83
Total	473.1 ypg	11	121
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
-14	-1.17	12	124

STAT CORNER

-1.38

OSU averaged 4.19 points per trip inside the opponent's 40 and allowed 5.57. That minus-1.38 margin ranked 126th in FBS.

OFFENSE Jake Luton is back at quarterback after a thoracic spine fracture ended his junior season in its fourth game. The 6'7" former junior-college All-American leads the transition from a spread offense to an up-tempo pro style. Luton has a strong arm but will need to improve his decision making in the new scheme to keep OSU from having the lowest-rated passing offense in the Pac-12 for the fourth year in a row.

Luton will have some experienced pieces around him, starting with junior running back Artavis Pierce. Pierce saw his production and usage drop last season, but he is a shifty runner with hands that make him a pass-catching threat out of the backfield, helping to diversify the offense while making up for the losses of Ryan Nall and Thomas Tyner.

In the passing game, the Beavers have a pair of big targets with wide receiver Isaiah Hodgins and tight end Noah Togiai as well as a reliable possession receiver in Timmy Hernandez. They will need to get more production from complementary pieces such as Trevon Bradford and other less experienced pieces.

Left tackle Blake Brandel is the leader of an offensive line that struggled in 2017.

DEFENSE Oregon State regressed defensively in every category last season, falling to 121st nationally in total defense (473.1 ypg) and 128th in scoring defense (43.0 ppg). But the Beavers are not without talent on this side of the ball, despite losing leading tackler, team captain and former inside linebacker Manase Hungalu. Senior inside linebacker Jonathan Willis and outside linebacker Bright Ugwoegbu are taking on leadership roles. They will have to mesh with talented but unproven recruiting classmates Shemar Smith, Andrzej Hughes-Murray, Kee Whetzel and Hamilcar Rashed — all of whom were part of the class of 2016.

Cornerbacks Xavier Crawford (back) and Dwayne Williams (knee) are back after losing most of the 2017 season to injuries, while formidable safeties Jalen Moore and David Morris fill out the Beavers' hard-hitting back line. Moore and Morris were Oregon State's second-leading tacklers last season at 75 apiece.

The biggest question mark is on the defensive line, undoubtedly the thinnest position group on the roster. Kalani Vakameilalo has had the most productive career of the group with the versatility to play nose tackle or move outside in the 3-4 scheme. Elu Aydon has the potential to be a key complementary piece to Vakameilalo in the middle, although the American Samoa native has dealt with issues keeping his weight down.

SPECIALISTS Jordan Choukair is back as the placekicker and will be attempting to show off improved leg strength. He made all 30 extra points last season but was 12-of-19 on field goals, including 3-of-9 on kicks of 40 yards or longer. Alex Bland and Daniel Rodriguez look to replace Nick Porebski at punter. Bland, an Australia native, supplanted Porebski as a starter late last season when the senior struggled.

FINAL ANALYSIS For the second time, Jonathan Smith is looking to lead a rebuild at Oregon State. The challenge may be more immense as a coach than when he took over as the Beavers' quarterback under coach Mike Riley (now his assistant). The Beavers aren't trying to snap a streak of 28 consecutive losing seasons like in 1999, but the gap between them and the rest of the Pac-12 felt as wide as ever last year. Still, if OSU can buy into what Smith is selling and move past a disastrous 2017, his first season as a head coach will be considered a success.



NOAH TOGIAI

"They need team identity. Who are you going to be on offense? How are you going to recruit to defense when you've got Nike money against you in-state."

— An opposing Pac-12 assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)					
WR	**17**	**Isaiah Hodgins (So.)**	**86**	Andre Bodden (Jr.)	
WR	**18**	**Timmy Hernandez (Sr.)**	**9**	Tino Allen (So.)	
WR	**8**	Trevon Bradford (Jr.)	**5**	Kolby Taylor (Fr.)	
LT	**73**	**Blake Brandel (Jr.)**	**55**	Keli'i Montibon (So.)	
LG	**63**	**Gus Lavaka (Jr.)**	**65**	Onesimus Clarke (Fr.)	
C	**52**	**Sumner Houston (Sr.)**	**76**	Yanni Demogerontas (Sr.)	
RG	**51**	Kammy Delp (Sr.)	**69**	Nous Keobounnam (So.)	
RT	**67**	**Trent Moore (Sr.)**	**78**	Clay Cordasco (Jr.)	
TE	**81**	**Noah Togiai (Jr.)**	**82**	Tuli Wily-Matagi (Jr.)	
QB	**6**	Jake Luton (Sr.)	**15**	Mason Moran (So.)	
RB	**21**	Artavis Pierce (Jr.)	**23**	Calvin Tyler (So.)	
DEFENSE (5)					
DE	**97**	**Kalani Vakameilalo (Sr.)**	**91**	Jeromy Reichner (Jr.)	
NT	**99**	Elu Aydon (Jr.)	**90**	Isaac Hodgins (Fr.)	
DE	**96**	LaMone Williams (Sr.)	**92**	Isaac Garcia (Fr.)	
OLB	**1**	**Bright Ugwoegbu (Sr.)**	**37**	Kee Whetzel (So.)	
ILB	**32**	**Jonathan Willis (Sr.)**	**42**	Doug Taumoelau (So.)	
ILB	**41**	Shemar Smith (Jr.)	**58**	Hamilton Hunt (Jr.)	
OLB	**49**	Andrzej Hughes-Murray (Jr.)	**59**	Hamilcar Rashed (So.)	
CB	**5**	Xavier Crawford (Jr.)	**22**	Isaiah Dunn (So.)	
CB	**4**	Dwayne Williams (Sr.)	**6**	Jay Irvine (Jr.)	
S	**33**	**Jalen Moore (Jr.)**	**36**	Jeffrey Manning (Fr.)	
S	**12**	**David Morris (So.)**	**10**	Omar Hicks-Onu (Jr.)	
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K	**46**	Jordan Choukair (Jr.)	**KR**	**23**	Calvin Tyler (So.)
P	**38**	Alex Bland (So.)	**PR**	**8**	Trevon Bradford (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Jake Luton, 135-83-853-4, 4 TDs
Rushing: Artavis Pierce, 68 att., 323 yds., 1 TD
Receiving: Noah Togiai, 34 rec., 461 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Jalen Moore, 75; David Morris, 75
Sacks: Jonathan Willis, 3.0
Interceptions: Three players tied with 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Jonathan Smith
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: First Season
Offensive Coordinator: Brian Lindgren
Defensive Coordinator: Tim Tibesar
Corvallis, OR • Reser Stadium (45,674)

Karl Maasdam/Oregon State Athletics

Stanford **Cardinal**

National Forecast: **18** • Pac-12 North Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **8-4, 6-3 Pac-12**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug.	31	San Diego State
Sept.	8	USC
Sept.	15	UC Davis
Sept.	22	at Oregon
Sept.	29	at Notre Dame
Oct.	6	Utah
Oct.	18	at Arizona State
Oct.	27	Washington State
Nov.	3	at Washington
Nov.	10	Oregon State
Nov.	17	at California
Nov.	24	at UCLA

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 9-5, 7-2 PAC-12

Aug.	26	vs. Rice #	W	62-7
Sept.	9	at USC	L	24-42
Sept.	16	at San Diego State	L	17-20
Sept.	23	UCLA	W	58-34
Sept.	30	Arizona State	W	34-24
Oct.	7	at Utah	W	23-20
Oct.	14	Oregon	W	49-7
Oct.	26	at Oregon State	W	15-14
Nov.	4	at Washington State	L	21-24
Nov.	10	Washington	W	30-22
Nov.	18	California	W	17-14
Nov.	25	Notre Dame	W	38-20
Dec.	1	vs. USC %	L	28-31
Dec.	28	vs. TCU &	L	37-39

#Sydney, Australia %Santa Clara &Alamo Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Tanner McKee, QB, Corona, CA
2. Jack West, QB, Saraland, AL
3. Michael Wilson, WR, Simi Valley, CA
4. Andres Fox, DE, Mobile, AL
5. Thomas Booker, DE, Ellicott City, MD
6. Kendall Williamson, CB, Snellville, GA
7. Tobe Umerah, OLB, Macon, GA
8. Trey Stratford, C, Allen, TX
9. Jacob Mangum-Farrar, ILB, Sugar Land, TX
10. Caleb Kelly, OLB, Fairburn, GA

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	PAC-12	NATIONAL
Scoring	32.4 ppg	6	38
Rushing	202.4 ypg	3	30
Passing	186.3 ypg	11	99
Total	388.6 ypg	10	79
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	22.7 ppg	2	34
Rushing	169.0 ypg	7	68
Passing	236.1 ypg	5	80
Total	405.1 ypg	6	76
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
+16	+1.14	1	4

STAT CORNER

-3.8

Based on fumble recovery and interception rates, Stanford's expected turnover margin was minus-3.8. Actual margin: plus-16.

OFFENSE This could become Stanford's best offense since Andrew Luck's reign in 2010 and 2011. The Cardinal welcome back their quarterback (K.J. Costello), top five rushers — led by Heisman Trophy runner up Bryce Love — top four receivers and placekicker. And four of five offensive linemen are back.

Costello took over for Keller Chryst and found his rhythm down the stretch in 2017, leading the Cardinal to wins over Washington and Notre Dame and a Pac-12 North championship. He wasn't prolific — his season-high passing yardage was 212 against TCU — but the 6'5", 220-pounder flashed enough to convince Chryst to transfer to Tennessee.

Love is one of the Heisman Trophy favorites after becoming the fourth Cardinal Heisman runner-up since 2009. His 2,118 rushing yards in 2017 were the second-best total in Pac-12 history.

While the term "possession receiver" might sound like dubious praise, few hit that mark more admirably than JJ Arcega-Whiteside, who hauled in nine TDs last year, and Trenton Irwin, who caught 43 passes. Another intriguing youngster is Osiris St. Brown, a former touted recruit who redshirted due to injury. As for tight end, Stanford is again stacked — Colby Parkinson and Kaden Smith combined for nine TDs last year.

Stanford should have one of the better offensive lines in the Pac-12, if not the nation, this fall. Four starters and much of the 2017 depth chart return up front. Freshman All-American Walker Little is a budding superstar at tackle.

DEFENSE For once, Stanford is hurting, or at least questionable, on its defensive line. End Jovan Swann accounted for just 1.5 sacks and 3.5 tackles for a loss last year, and he's the leading name on the depth chart. While true freshmen don't often break the defensive rotation on the Farm, Thomas Booker could do that at end if he offers up some pass-rushing potential.

The solution up front may be leaning on better talent and depth at linebacker and in the secondary. Stanford often played a 2-4-5 scheme last year, and that might be the best way to get the best players on the field.

Bobby Okereke, an honorable mention All-Pac-12 pick last season, is one of three fifth-year seniors at linebacker and looks like the leader of the unit. He'll pair inside with Sean Barton, who went down with a season-ending knee injury in Week 3 last year against San Diego State.

The secondary took a couple of big hits with safety Justin Reid and cornerback Quenton Meeks off to the NFL, but it is better equipped to handle the departures than the D-line. A healthy return of veteran but oft-injured cornerback Alijah Holder is critical.

SPECIALISTS The Cardinal are set in the kicking game thanks to the return of placekicker Jet Toner, who connected on 21-of-26 field goals, and punter Jake Bailey, a second-team All-Pac-12 selection.

FINAL ANALYSIS For years, Stanford has led with its defense, which it backed up with a rugged, run-first offensive attack. That could change this year The Stanford offense hasn't eclipsed 40 points per game since 2011, when Luck lined up behind center. It could in 2018. And it might need to, thanks to a defense in transition.

Stanford visits Pac-12 North favorite Washington on Nov. 3, but we'll get a good picture of the Cardinal before September is over, with games vs. USC, at Oregon and at Notre Dame.



BRYCE LOVE

"They really are a smart team. They don't play out of position. They don't make little mistakes. They do a lot of the simple things really well."

— An opposing Pac-12 assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)

WR	2	**Trenton Irwin (Sr.)**	81	Osiris St. Brown (Fr.)	
WR	19	**JJ Arcega-Whiteside (Jr.)**	5	Connor Wedington (So.)	
LT	72	Walker Little (So.)	79	Foster Sarell (So.)	
LG	63	**Nate Herbig (Jr.)**	55	Dylan Powell (So.)	
C	73	**Jesse Burkett (Sr.)**	65	Brian Chaffin (Jr.)	
RG	71	Brandon Fanaika (Sr.)	54	Nick Wilson (Jr.)	
RT	75	**A.T. Hall (Sr.)**	74	**Devery Hamilton (So.)**	
TE	84	Colby Parkinson (So.)	82	Kaden Smith (So.)	
QB	3	**K.J. Costello (So.)**	15	Davis Mills (Fr.)	
RB	20	**Bryce Love (Sr.)**	22	Cameron Scarlett (Jr.)	
FB	6	Reagan Williams (Jr.)	34	Houston Heimuli (Fr.)	

DEFENSE (6)

DE	51	Jovan Swann (So.)		Thomas Booker (Fr.)
DT	57	Michael Williams (So.)	50	Dalyn Wade-Perry (Fr.)
DE	97	**Dylan Jackson (Jr.)**	91	Thomas Schaffer (Jr.)
OLB	32	Joey Alfieri (Sr.)	21	Curtis Robinson (Jr.)
ILB	20	**Bobby Okereke (Sr.)**	31	Mustafa Branch (Sr.)
ILB	27	Sean Barton (Jr.)	15	**Jordan Perez (Sr.)**
OLB	52	Casey Toohill (Jr.)	10	Jordan Fox (So.)
CB	13	**Alijah Holder (Sr.)**	17	Paulson Adebo (Fr.)
CB	3	Malik Antoine (So.)	4	**Alameen Murphy (Sr.)**
S	5	**Frank Buncom (Jr.)**	18	Stuart Head (Fr.)
S	9	Ben Edwards (Sr.)	2	Brandon Simmons (Sr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	26	Jet Toner (So.)	KR	22	Cameron Scarlett (Jr.)
P	14	Jake Bailey (Sr.)	PR	4	Jay Tyler (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: K.J. Costello, 211-124-1,573-4, 14 TDs
Rushing: Bryce Love, 263 att., 2,118 yds., 19 TDs
Receiving: JJ Arcega-Whiteside, 48 rec., 781 yds., 9 TDs
Tackles: Bobby Okereke, 96
Sacks: Bobby Okereke, 4.0
Interceptions: Frank Buncom, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: David Shaw
Record at School: 73-22 (7 years)
Career Record: 73-22 (7 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Tavita Pritchard
Defensive Coordinator: Lance Anderson
Stanford, CA • Stanford Stadium (50,424)

Peter Brouillet

Washington **Huskies**

National Forecast: **8** • Pac-12 North Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **11-2, 8-1 Pac-12**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	vs. Auburn #
Sept.	8	North Dakota
Sept.	15	at Utah
Sept.	22	Arizona State
Sept.	29	BYU
Oct.	6	at UCLA
Oct.	13	at Oregon
Oct.	20	Colorado
Oct.	27	at California
Nov.	3	Stanford
Nov.	17	Oregon State
Nov.	23	at Washington State

#Atlanta

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 10-3, 6-2 PAC-12

Sept.	1	at Rutgers	W	30-14
Sept.	9	Montana	W	63-7
Sept.	16	Fresno State	W	48-16
Sept.	23	at Colorado	W	37-10
Sept.	30	at Oregon State	W	42-7
Oct.	7	California	W	35-7
Oct.	14	at Arizona State	L	7-13
Oct.	28	UCLA	W	44-23
Nov.	4	Oregon	W	38-3
Nov.	10	at Stanford	L	22-30
Nov.	18	Utah	W	33-30
Nov.	25	Washington State	W	41-14
Dec.	30	vs. Penn State #	L	28-35

#Fiesta Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Marquis Spiker, WR, Wildomar, CA
2. Colson Yankoff, QB, Hayden, ID
3. Jacob Sirmon, QB, Bothell, WA
4. Tuli Letuligasenoa, DT, Concord, CA
5. Ale Kaho, ILB, Reno, NV
6. Julius Irvin, S, Anaheim, CA
7. Kyler Gordon, CB, Mukilteo, WA
8. Sam Taimani, OG, Salt Lake City, UT
9. Austin Osborne, WR, Mission Viejo, CA
10. Trey Lowe, WR, Portland, OR

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	PAC-12	NATIONAL
Scoring	36.2 ppg	2	17
Rushing	183.2 ypg	5	44
Passing	222.2 ypg	8	72
Total	405.5 ypg	9	58
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	16.1 ppg	1	5
Rushing	100.8 ypg	1	4
Passing	197.2 ypg	3	32
Total	298.0 ypg	1	8
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
+13	+1.00	2	5

STAT CORNER

+1.5

Washington averaged 5.2 points per trip inside the opponent's 40 and allowed just 3.7. That plus-1.5 margin ranked third in FBS.

OFFENSE The Huskies return seven starters on offense and feature everything except a proven deep threat at receiver. Fill that vacancy, and this team could score at will.

Quarterback Jake Browning, a 39-game starter, has put together an impressive career yet comes off a confounding junior campaign. He went from Pac-12 Offensive Player of the Year in 2016 to honorable mention all-league pick last year. His touchdown passes dropped markedly from 43 to 19 as he lost all but one of his top receivers to injury. To stretch the field and bring Browning's numbers back up, Washington needs senior Chico McClatcher to bounce back from a broken ankle in a big way, or for prized recruit Marquis Spiker to make early inroads, or both. Likewise, the Huskies could benefit from a full recovery by sophomore tight end Hunter Bryant, a budding star and Browning's go-to receiver before he suffered a knee injury.

Senior Myles Gaskin has 4,055 career rushing yards and is on the verge of becoming Washington's all-time leader. His combination of balance and quickness creates problems for opposing defenses.

The strength of the offense lies up front: The line is huge and seasoned. Trey Adams and Kaleb McGary are bookend tackles and NFL prospects. The 6'7", 318-pound McGary, a 33-game starter on the right side, was selected first-team All-Pac-12 in 2017. The 6'8", 327-pound Adams was an all-conference pick in 2016 but missed the final six games last season with a knee injury. He uses his nimble feet to open up sizable holes and could be a first-round NFL pick.

DEFENSE The Huskies return six players who started at least six games to a secondary that has no equal in the Pac-12. Junior free safety Taylor Rapp, a two-year regular, is a returning first-team All-Pac-12 selection with a knack for making the big play. He lines up opposite senior strong safety JoJo McIntosh, a second-team all-conference choice and a fierce hitter.

Washington lost the dominant Vita Vea to the pros but still should be fearsome up front. Greg Gaines is the reason. The 33-game starter at nose tackle is one of the more underrated players in the conference, adept at getting leverage and disruptive enough to log 14 tackles for a loss in his career.

The Huskies could use a playmaker at linebacker. Starters return in senior inside linebacker Ben Burr-Kirven, a short, disciplined player who led the team in tackles with 84, and senior Tevis Bartlett, a steady performer who was tops with 12 tackles for a loss on the outside and has moved inside. Freshman Ale Kaho, a five-star recruit, likely will play right away.

SPECIALISTS If there's a weakness to this Washington team, it's with the placekicking. Van Soderberg couldn't hang onto the job during his first season, suffering from a case of nerves, but he'll get another shot to settle in. He has one career field goal made. The punter position, however, is in great shape with junior Joel Whitford.

FINAL ANALYSIS In Year 5 of the Chris Petersen era, the meticulous Washington coach will trot out a rarefied group that boasts 16 returning starters from a team that won 10 games. The Huskies take a backseat to no team when it comes to game experience. They're positioned to run with college football's elite again this season, and expectations are through the roof in Seattle. All Petersen's club needs to do now is stay relatively healthy — and win.



JAKE BROWNING

"Offensively they're actually a very simple team, it's just that they're really good at what they do and they do it multiple ways. That's great coaching."

— An opposing Pac-12 assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	6	Chico McClatcher (Sr.)	12	Aaron Fuller (Jr.)
WR		Marquis Spiker (Fr.)	20	Ty Jones (So.)
LT	**72**	**Trey Adams (Sr.)**	70	Jared Hilbers (Jr.)
LG	76	Luke Wattenberg (So.)	65	Jaxson Kirkland (Fr.)
C	**56**	**Nick Harris (Jr.)**	71	Matt James (Sr.)
RG	**75**	**Jesse Sosebee (Sr.)**	59	Henry Roberts (Jr.)
RT	**58**	**Kaleb McGary (Sr.)**	77	Devin Burleson (Jr.)
TE	**88**	**Drew Sample (Sr.)**	86	Jacob Kizer (So.)
TE	19	Hunter Bryant (So.)	87	Cade Otton (Fr.)
QB	**3**	**Jake Browning (Sr.)**	7	Colson Yankoff (Fr.)
RB	**9**	**Myles Gaskin (Sr.)**	26	Salvon Ahmed (So.)

DEFENSE (9)

DE	**8**	**Benning Potoa'e (Jr.)**	92	Jaylen Johnson (Sr.)
NT	**99**	**Greg Gaines (Sr.)**	96	Shane Bowman (Sr.)
DT	95	Levi Onwuzurike (So.)	56	Jared Pulu (Jr.)
ILB	**17**	**Tevis Bartlett (Sr.)**	15	DJ Beavers (Jr.)
ILB	**25**	**Ben Burr-Kirven (Sr.)**		Ale Kaho (Fr.)
OLB	55	Ryan Bowman (So.)	52	Ariel Ngata (Fr.)
CB	4	Austin Joyner (Jr.)	**23**	**Jordan Miller (Sr.)**
CB	**1**	**Byron Murphy (So.)**		Julius Irvin (Fr.)
NB	**5**	**Myles Bryant (Jr.)**	3	Elijah Molden (So.)
SS	**14**	**JoJo McIntosh (Sr.)**	11	Brandon McKinney (So.)
FS	**7**	**Taylor Rapp (Jr.)**	18	Isaiah Gilchrist (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	42	Van Soderberg (So.)	KR	26	Salvon Ahmed (So.)
P	32	Joel Whitford (Jr.)	PR	12	Aaron Fuller (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Jake Browning, 336-230-2,719-5, 19 TDs
Rushing: Myles Gaskin, 222 att., 1,380 yds., 21 TDs
Receiving: Aaron Fuller, 26 rec., 291 yds., 1 TD
Tackles: Ben Burr-Kirven, 84
Sacks: Ryan Bowman, 5.5
Interceptions: Byron Murphy, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Chris Petersen
Record at School: 37-17 (4 years)
Career Record: 129-29 (12 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Bush Hamdan, Matt Lubick
Defensive Coordinators: Pete Kwiatkowski, Jimmy Lake
Seattle, WA • Husky Stadium (70,138)

Getty Images

Washington State **Cougars**

National Forecast: **64** • Pac-12 North Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **6-6, 3-6 Pac-12**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at Wyoming
Sept.	8	San Jose State
Sept.	15	Eastern Washington
Sept.	21	at USC
Sept.	29	Utah
Oct.	6	at Oregon State
Oct.	20	Oregon
Oct.	27	at Stanford
Nov.	3	California
Nov.	10	at Colorado
Nov.	17	Arizona
Nov.	23	Washington

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 9-4, 6-3 PAC-12

Sept.	2	Montana State	W	31-0
Sept.	9	Boise State	(ot) W	47-44
Sept.	16	Oregon State	W	52-23
Sept.	23	Nevada	W	45-7
Sept.	29	USC	W	30-27
Oct.	7	at Oregon	W	33-10
Oct.	13	at California	L	3-37
Oct.	21	Colorado	W	28-0
Oct.	28	at Arizona	L	37-58
Nov.	4	Stanford	W	24-21
Nov.	11	at Utah	W	33-25
Nov.	25	at Washington	L	14-41
Dec.	28	vs. Michigan State #	L	17-42

#Holiday Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Rodrick Fisher, WR, Spokane Valley, WA
2. Cammon Cooper, QB, Lehi, UT
3. Drue Jackson, WR, Sachse, TX
4. Max Borghi, RB, Arvada, CO
5. RJ Stone, DE, San Jose, CA
6. Halid Djibril, S, Los Angeles, CA
7. D'Angelo McKenzie, S, San Jose, CA
8. Kassidy Woods, WR, Addison, TX
9. Cade Beresford, OT, Woodinville, WA
10. Blake McDonald, OG, Danville, CA

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	PAC-12	NATIONAL
Scoring	30.3 ppg	8	50
Rushing	68.0 ypg	12	129
Passing	366.8 ypg	1	2
Total	434.8 ypg	5	33
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	25.8 ppg	4	58
Rushing	152.4 ypg	4	47
Passing	170.9 ypg	1	9
Total	323.3 ypg	2	16
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
-3	-0.23	10	85

STAT CORNER

5

Washington State has ranked last in the nation in rushing attempts per game in five of Mike Leach's six seasons at the school.

OFFENSE Even with a system that places so much on the shoulders of its quarterback, Washington State fans haven't had too many sleepless nights during the Mike Leach/Air Raid era worrying about who's taking snaps for the Cougars. Leach's last two starters, Luke Falk and Connor Halliday, rank first and sixth, respectively, in career Pac-12 passing yards. Together, they threw more than 200 touchdowns. But after seven years of reliability at the QB position, the Cougars may finally have a dilemma. Six quarterbacks are in the running to succeed Falk, and not one has taken a snap at WSU. Trey Tinsley and Anthony Gordon, both redshirt juniors, came out of spring camp as the frontrunners, along with true freshman Cammon Cooper. If one of those three can't rise to the occasion, the job could fall to East Carolina graduate transfer Gardner Minshew, who arrives in August.

WSU's pass-first offense rarely defers to the run game, but when it does, James Williams won't be a bad No. 1 option. The shifty junior is eager to take on feature-back duties after rushing for 395 yards last season.

Tay Martin pulled in six touchdowns in his final six games, and the rangy, athletic sophomore could emerge as one of the conference's top pass-catchers this season. The Cougars have strong options in the slot, too, with Renard Bell, Jamire Calvin and Kyle Sweet.

The offensive line wasn't as cohesive as it needed to be in 2017, so starting from scratch with three new starters and a new position coach could help matters. Left tackle Andre Dillard is sturdy and savvy, and dependable center Fred Mauigoa returns.

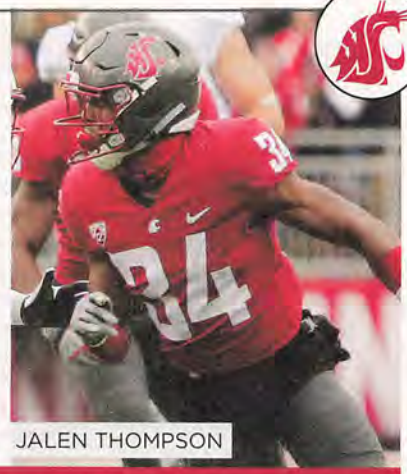
DEFENSE The Cougars are introducing a new coordinator (Tracy Claeys) but retaining many of the same concepts that helped them finish in the top 10 nationally last year in tackles for a loss per game (7.9) and total turnovers (28). How effective the pass-rush will be without All-America tackle Hercules Mata'afa remains to be seen, but end Nnamdi Oguayo could command the double teams Mata'afa got last year.

Linebacker is a rich position for the Cougars, who get Peyton Pelluer back for a sixth season after the defensive captain obtained another year of eligibility via medical hardship. A wave of young middle linebackers — Jahad Woods, Justus Rogers and Dillon Sherman — are also capable of shining for WSU.

Dynamic safety Jalen Thompson becomes the leader of the secondary after leading the Cougars in tackles (73) and interceptions (four). WSU has decent talent at all four spots, but the Cougars desperately need depth.

SPECIALISTS Jack Crane, who occasionally handled kickoffs, will see his job title expand and will likely replace Erik Powell as the full-time placekicker. WSU added strong-legged junior college transfer Oscar Draguicevich to patch up its punting shortfalls. Jitterbug receivers Calvin and Bell should give the Cougars some pop in the return game.

FINAL ANALYSIS In each of the past two seasons, Washington State fell four quarters shy of its first Pac-12 Championship Game appearance. It's unlikely that the race for the Pac-12 North will come down to the Apple Cup again, and fans may need to temper their expectations after WSU followed an eight-win season in 2016 with nine wins in '17. That doesn't mean that the Cougars will backslide too much. They may just have to find some middle ground: Competing for a title in the rugged Pac-12 North seems unrealistic, but a bowl game is within reach.



JALEN THOMPSON

"Not enough people recognized what (departed defensive coordinator) Alex Grinch was doing for them. They were a feisty team on defense."

— An opposing Pac-12 assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (4)

WR	1	Tay Martin (So.)	88	Rodrick Fisher (Fr.)	
WR	6	Jamire Calvin (So.)	**17**	**Kyle Sweet (Sr.)**	
WR	12	Dezmon Patmon (Jr.)	85	Easop Winston (Jr.)	
WR	**81**	**Renard Bell (So.)**	19	Brandon Arconado (Jr.)	
LT	**60**	**Andre Dillard (Sr.)**	63	Liam Ryan (So.)	
LG	65	Josh Watson (So.)	70	Christian Haangana (So.)	
C	**69**	**Fred Mauigoa (Jr.)**	59	Brian Greene (Fr.)	
RG	74	Robert Valencia (Sr.)	55	Noah Osur-Myers (Jr.)	
RT	78	Abraham Lucas (Fr.)	63	Liam Ryan (So.)	
QB		Gardner Minshew (Sr.)	10	Trey Tinsley (Jr.)	
RB	32	James Williams (Jr.)	21	Max Borghi (Fr.)	

DEFENSE (7)

DE	**30**	**Nnamdi Oguayo (Jr.)**	98	Dallas Hobbs (Fr.)	
DT	45	Logan Tago (Sr.)	55	Derek Moore (Jr.)	
NT	89	Nick Begg (Sr.)	99	Jonathan Lolohea (Jr.)	
RUSH	40	Chima Onyeukwu (Sr.)	46	Mason Vinyard (So.)	
LB	**47**	**Peyton Pelluer (Sr.)**	41	Dillon Sherman (So.)	
LB	**13**	**Jahad Woods (So.)**	37	Justus Rogers (So.)	
NB	**26**	**Hunter Dale (Sr.)**	29	Isaiah Love (Fr.)	
CB	**4**	**Marcus Strong (Jr.)**	27	Sean Harper Jr. (Sr.)	
CB	**3**	**Darrien Molton (Sr.)**	36	George Hicks (So.)	
SS	**34**	**Jalen Thompson (Jr.)**	22	Deion Singleton (Jr.)	
FS	28	Skyler Thomas (So.)	16	Grant Porter (So.)	

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	42	Jack Crane (So.)	**KR**	81	Renard Bell (So.)
P		Oscar Draguicevich (Jr.)	**PR**	6	Jamire Calvin (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: None
Rushing: James Williams, 92 att., 395 yds., 1 TD
Receiving: James Williams, 71 rec., 482 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: Jalen Thompson, 73
Sacks: Nnamdi Oguayo, 4.0
Interceptions: Jalen Thompson, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mike Leach
Record at School: 38-38 (6 years)
Career Record: 122-81 (16 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Mike Leach
Defensive Coordinator: Tracy Claeys
Pullman, WA • Martin Stadium (32,952)

AP

Arizona **Wildcats**

National Forecast: **32** • Pac-12 South Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **8-4, 5-4 Pac-12**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	BYU
Sept.	8	at Houston
Sept.	15	Southern Utah
Sept.	22	at Oregon State
Sept.	29	USC
Oct.	6	California
Oct.	12	at Utah
Oct.	20	at UCLA
Oct.	27	Oregon
Nov.	2	Colorado
Nov.	17	at Washington State
Nov.	24	Arizona State

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 5-4 PAC-12

Sept.	2	Northern Arizona	W	62-24
Sept.	9	Houston	L	16-19
Sept.	15	at UTEP	W	63-16
Sept.	22	Utah	L	24-30
Oct.	7	at Colorado	W	45-42
Oct.	14	UCLA	W	47-30
Oct.	21	at California (ot)	W	45-44
Oct.	28	Washington State	W	58-37
Nov.	4	at USC	L	35-49
Nov.	11	Oregon State	W	49-28
Nov.	18	at Oregon	L	28-48
Nov.	25	at Arizona State	L	30-42
Dec.	27	vs. Purdue #	L	35-38

#Foster Farms Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Kevin Doyle, QB, West Chester, PA
2. Jamarye Joiner, QB, Tucson, AZ
3. Adam Plant, DE, Las Vegas, NV
4. Dayven Coleman, S, Mesquite, TX
5. Jhevon Hill, CB, San Bernardino, CA
6. Nahe Sulunga, DE, Inglewood, CA
7. Christian Young, S, Richmond, TX
8. Thomas Marcus, WR, San Diego, CA
9. Zach Williams, WR, John's Creek, GA
10. Donovan Laie, OT, Oceanside, CA

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	PAC-12	NATIONAL
Scoring	41.3 ppg	1	5
Rushing	309.3 ypg	1	3
Passing	180.2 ypg	12	101
Total	489.5 ypg	1	12
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	34.4 ppg	10	109
Rushing	185.1 ypg	9	86
Passing	286.1 ypg	12	124
Total	471.2 ypg	10	119
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
+3	+0.23	4	46

STAT CORNER

3.3

Khalil Tate effect: Arizona averaged 3.3 rushes of 20 yards or more per game, second most in FBS and behind only Army.

OFFENSE Arizona led the Pac-12 in scoring and total offense last year, and new coach Kevin Sumlin has the resources to match that 2017 production. Junior Khalil Tate was the Pac-12 Offensive Player of the Week four weeks in succession last October, which was unprecedented. Tate was a perfect fit for Rich Rodriguez's system, which was based around a quarterback's ability to run. Tate carried 153 times; he avoided injury but is unlikely to average anywhere near 15 rushes per game in Sumlin's offense, which is more balanced. The Wildcats' running backs situation is also promising after UA led the Pac-12 in rushing yards last year. J.J. Taylor is a quick and elusive outside runner but is facing significant competition from sophomores Nathan Tilford and Gary Brightwell.

Arizona was last in the Pac-12 in passing a year ago, but Sumlin won't have difficulty finding talented receivers. Sophomore tight ends Bryce Wolma and Jamie Nunley are a key part of the scheme. Slot receiver Shun Brown, a senior, is Arizona's most productive pass catcher. He caught 43 balls for 573 yards. Among of the discoveries of spring practice was 6'5" senior Shawn Poindexter, who emerged as a potential go-to target.

One of Arizona's strengths will be the foursome of tackle Layth Friekh — granted a fifth year of eligibility by the NCAA — center Nathan Eldridge, versatile tackle-guard Cody Creason and likely first-time starting guard Michael Eletise. Michigan State transfer Tshiyombu Lukusa provides depth.

DEFENSE With nine returning starters, Arizona should improve on last year's ranking of 10th in the Pac-12 in total defense.

Three sophomore linebackers — Colin Schooler, Tony Fields II and Kylan Wilborn — started as freshmen and have star potential. They are the core and personality of the defense.

Undersized and outmanned for most of the Rich-Rod era, Arizona has some size and depth up front. Fifth-year senior Dereck Boles and junior Finton Connolly are sturdy and have a reasonable amount of Pac-12 experience. The development of end Lee Anderson III and the progress of third-year starting end Justin Belknap give Arizona four good options.

Senior cornerback Jace Whittaker likes to hit and has three full years of experience. Senior safety Demetrius Flannigan-Fowles is a lot like Whittaker, a three-year starter. Sophomore Lorenzo Burns won a starting job and made 81 tackles at corner. Sophomore safety Scottie Young was an immediate starter as a freshman. However, Young was suspended for spring drills for unspecified reasons, and his status is uncertain.

SPECIALISTS Dylan Klumph, a grad transfer from Cal, will be asked to fix Arizona's punting problems; the Wildcats were last in the league with a 34.2-yard punting average. The kicking game appears strong: Senior Josh Pollack and sophomore Lucas Havrisik shared the job a year ago and are back. Brown is one of the league's most reliable punt returners.

FINAL ANALYSIS With a forgiving schedule — Arizona does not play Washington or Stanford — the Wildcats are positioned to contend for the Pac-12 South title. Arizona is thin on defense, but its starters are of Pac-12 quality. Tate will attempt to be the school's first All-Pac-12 first-team quarterback since Arizona joined the league in 1978. But much like on defense, Arizona is not deep and has no game-ready backup should Tate go down. Still, this is Arizona's most anticipated season since 2010.



KHALIL TATE

"Kevin Sumlin will be able to go as far east as Dallas and compete for talent. Can't remember a time when Arizona could do that."

— An opposing Pac-12 assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)

WR	6	**Shun Brown (Sr.)**	**18**	**Cedric Peterson (Jr.)**	
WR	9	**Tony Ellison (Sr.)**	7	Devaughn Cooper (So.)	
WR	19	**Shawn Poindexter (Sr.)**	5	Brian Casteel (So.)	
LT	58	**Layth Friekh (Sr.)**	74	Alex Kosinski (Jr.)	
LG	54	Bryson Cain (So.)	72	Edgar Burrola (Fr.)	
C	64	**Nathan Eldridge (Jr.)**	67	Steven Bailey (Jr.)	
RG	75	Michael Eletise (So.)	71	Abraham Maiava (Jr.)	
RT	76	Cody Creason (Jr.)	70	Tshiyombu Lukusa (So.)	
TE	81	**Bryce Wolma (So.)**	85	Jamie Nunley (So.)	
QB	14	**Khalil Tate (Jr.)**	11	K'Hari Lane (Fr.)	
RB	21	J.J. Taylor (So.)	33	Nathan Tilford (So.)	

DEFENSE (9)

DE	51	Lee Anderson III (Jr.)	77	Adam Plant (Fr.)
DT	91	Finton Connolly (Jr.)	55	PJ Johnson (Jr.)
DT	99	**Dereck Boles (Sr.)**	60	Mykee Irving (Fr.)
DE	86	**Justin Belknap (Jr.)**	94	Sione Taufahema (Jr.)
LB	14	**Kylan Wilborn (So.)**	49	Jalen Harris (Fr.)
LB	7	**Colin Schooler (So.)**	12	J.B Brown (So).
LB	1	**Tony Fields II (So.)**	26	Anthony Pandy (So.)
CB	17	**Jace Whittaker (Sr.)**	21	Isaiah Hayes (So.)
CB	2	**Lorenzo Burns (So.)**	4	Antonio Parks (So.)
S	6	**D. Flannigan-Fowles (Sr.)**	31	Tristan Cooper (Jr.)
S	19	**Scottie Young (So.)**	3	Jarrius Wallace (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	30	Josh Pollack (Sr.)	**KR**	86	Stanley Berryhill (Fr.)
P	11	Dylan Klumph (Sr.)	**PR**	6	Shun Brown (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Khalil Tate, 179-111-1,591-9, 14 TDs
Rushing: Khalil Tate, 153 att., 1,411 yds., 12 TDs
Receiving: Shun Brown, 43 rec., 573 yds., 6 TDs
Tackles: Tony Fields II, 104
Sacks: Kylan Wilborn, 7.5
Interceptions: Lorenzo Burns, 5

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Kevin Sumlin
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: 86-43 (10 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Noel Mazzone
Defensive Coordinator: Marcel Yates
Tucson, AZ • Arizona Stadium (55,675)

Peter Brouillet

Arizona State **Sun Devils**

National Forecast: **68** • Pac-12 South Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **5-7, 3-6 Pac-12**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	UTSA
Sept.	8	Michigan State
Sept.	15	at San Diego State
Sept.	22	at Washington
Sept.	29	Oregon State
Oct.	6	at Colorado
Oct.	18	Stanford
Oct.	27	at USC
Nov.	3	Utah
Nov.	10	UCLA
Nov.	17	at Oregon
Nov.	24	at Arizona

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 6-3 PAC-12

Aug.	31	New Mexico State	W	37-31
Sept.	9	San Diego State	L	20-30
Sept.	16	at Texas Tech	L	45-52
Sept.	23	Oregon	W	37-35
Sept.	30	at Stanford	L	24-34
Oct.	14	Washington	W	13-7
Oct.	21	at Utah	W	30-13
Oct.	28	USC	L	17-48
Nov.	4	Colorado	W	41-30
Nov.	11	at UCLA	L	37-44
Nov.	18	at Oregon State	W	40-24
Nov.	25	Arizona	W	42-30
Dec.	29	vs. NC State #	L	31-52

#Sun Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Merlin Robertson, OLB, Gardena, CA
2. Aashari Crosswell, S, Long Beach, CA
3. Jarrett Bell, OG, Norco, CA
4. Reggie Hughes, OLB, Calabasas, CA
5. Jermayne Lole, DE, Long Beach, CA
6. Geordon Porter, Rancho Cucamonga, CA
7. Dominique Harrison, CB, Houston, TX*
8. Brock Sturges, RB, Allen, TX
9. AJ Carter, RB, Many, LA
10. Stanley Lambert, OLB, San Antonio, TX

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	PAC-12	NATIONAL
Scoring	31.8 ppg	7	42
Rushing	175.5 ypg	6	51
Passing	255.7 ypg	6	43
Total	431.2 ypg	6	37
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	32.8 ppg	9	103
Rushing	174.8 ypg	8	78
Passing	274.9 ypg	11	121
Total	449.7 ypg	8	109
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
+2	+0.15	5	56

STAT CORNER

1989

The last time Herm Edwards coached in college was 1989, the same year that "Honey, I Shrunk the Kids" torched the box office.

OFFENSE Arizona State has its fourth offensive coordinator in as many years, which has created an ever-moving target in terms of schematic principles and skill development. The good news is most of the key personnel returns, led by quarterback Manny Wilkins, an all-league candidate, wide receiver N'Keal Harry, a potential All-American, and four offensive line starters. The Sun Devils will remain a spread, 11-personnel base offense under coordinator Rob Likens, elevated to the role by new head coach Herm Edwards. They'll reduce the breadth of their run-game concepts and emphasize execution, with a heavy dose of run-pass options and quick-hitting screens.

Stanford post-graduate transfer Casey Tucker will take over at left tackle, with junior Cohl Cabral shifting to center in what will be one of the Pac-12's most experienced offensive lines. Junior wide receiver Kyle Williams is a burgeoning star to complement Harry, the Pac-12's top returning pass catcher.

The running back position has been refreshed with talented sophomore Eno Benjamin, the top recruit in ASU's 2017 signing class, leading the way and four newcomers arriving this summer. Expect the Sun Devils to throw more to the backs this year as well.

A lot of quarterback talent has left the Pac-12 from last season, giving a very experienced Wilkins a chance to shine under a brighter spotlight, with the benefit of one of the league's top receiver duos to showcase.

DEFENSE First-year coordinator Danny Gonzales is managing an overhaul that starts with installation of a 3-3-5 scheme authored by his mentor, San Diego State's Rocky Long. It's different in some key respects from any other Pac-12 defense in how it attacks and defends the run, with a hybrid safety-linebacker position named after ASU legend Pat Tillman taking center stage. The Sun Devils don't have anyone established for the role yet, with senior Dasmond Tautalatasi and sophomore Evan Fields the top options.

Cornerback Chase Lucas was Pac-12's only freshman all-league player, while Kobe Williams returns as a very capable starter at the position. Senior Jalen Harvey started at receiver last year but converted to safety, where he'll have a big role.

The Sun Devils are thin at linebacker but have some potential star power. Senior Koron Crump earned an extra year of eligibility via appeal and will be one of the league's top pass rushers. Converted tight end Jay Jay Wilson showed promise at linebacker last year and had a terrific offseason.

Senior nose tackle Renell Wren is arguably the team's best NFL prospect and the centerpiece of a deep defensive line that includes George Lea and Shannon Forman, both of whom played a lot last season.

SPECIALISTS Sophomore placekicker Brandon Ruiz is one of the top young talents at the position in the country. Junior punter Michael Sleep-Dalton is a returning starter who battled injury problems last season but still showed reasonably well. The Sun Devils need to improve their return game.

FINAL ANALYSIS The presence a handful of top-shelf Pac-12 players may mask to some degree the scope of ASU's overhaul, but at least it'll give the staff a boost in the transitional phase. While the Sun Devils likely won't challenge for the Pac-12 South division title, they have potential to remain relevant into November. All eyes will be on Edwards, one of the most intriguing hires in college football in years.



MANNY WILKINS

"Coach Edwards has a lot of respect in the industry, but this thing could crash and burn. If it does, it's probably because of recruiting."

– An opposing Pac-12 assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	1	**N'Keal Harry (Jr.)**	19	Terrell Chatman (Jr.)
WR	10	**Kyle Williams (Jr.)**	17	Ryan Newsome (Jr.)
WR	14	Ryan Jenkins (Sr.)	84	Frank Darby (So.)
LT	55	Casey Tucker (Sr.)	51	Zach Robertson (Jr.)
LG	51	Zach Robertson (Jr.)	56	Alex Losoya (Jr.)
C	73	**Cohl Cabral (Jr.)**	72	Cade Cote (Jr.)
RG	71	**Steven Miller (Jr.)**		Roy Hemsley (Jr.)
RT	59	**Quinn Bailey (Sr.)**	51	Zach Robertson (Jr.)
TE	88	**Ceejhay French-Love (Sr.)**	87	Tommy Hudson (Jr.)
QB	5	**Manny Wilkins (Sr.)**	8	Blake Barnett (Jr.)
RB	3	Eno Benjamin (So.)	35	Brock Sturges (Fr.)

DEFENSE (4)

DL	97	Shannon Forman (So.)	2	Darius Slade (Jr.)
DL	95	Renell Wren (Sr.)	45	George Lea (Jr.)
DL	96	Jalen Bates (Jr.)	99	Dougladson Subtyl (Sr.)
ILB	22	Nick Ralston (Jr.)	20	Khaylan Thomas (Jr.)
OLB	4	**Koron Crump (Sr.)**	39	Malik Lawal (Jr.)
OLB	9	Jay Jay Wilson (Sr.)	8	Merlin Robertson (Fr.)
CB	5	**Kobe Williams (Jr.)**	21	Terin Adams (So.)
CB	24	**Chase Lucas (So.)**	37	Joey Bryant (Sr.)
S	6	Evan Fields (So.)	30	**Dasmond Tautalatasi (Sr.)**
S	43	Jalen Harvey (Sr.)	7	Dominique Harrison (Jr.)
S	16	Aashari Crosswell (Fr.)	18	Langston Frederick (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	1	Brandon Ruiz (So.)	KR	24	Chase Lucas (So.)
P	36	Michael Sleep-Dalton (Jr.)	PR	3	Eno Benjamin (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Manny Wilkins, 410-260-3,270-8, 20 TDs
Rushing: Manny Wilkins, 138 att., 282 yds., 7 TDs
Receiving: N'Keal Harry, 82 rec., 1,142 yds., 8 TDs
Tackles: Chase Lucas, 59
Sacks: Koron Crump, 4.0
Interceptions: Chase Lucas, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Herm Edwards
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: First Season
Offensive Coordinator: Rob Likens
Defensive Coordinator: Danny Gonzales
Tempe, AZ • Sun Devil Stadium (57,078)

Peter Brouillet

Colorado Buffaloes

National Forecast: **67** • Pac-12 South Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **6-6, 4-5 Pac-12**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	vs. Colorado State #
Sept.	8	at Nebraska
Sept.	15	New Hampshire
Sept.	28	UCLA
Oct.	6	Arizona State
Oct.	13	at USC
Oct.	20	at Washington
OCT.	27	Oregon State
Nov.	2	at Arizona
Nov.	10	Washington State
Nov.	17	Utah
Nov.	24	at California

#Denver

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 2-7 PAC-12

Sept.	1	vs. Colorado State #	W	17-3
Sept.	9	Texas State	W	37-3
Sept.	16	Northern Colorado	W	41-21
Sept.	23	Washington	L	10-37
Sept.	30	at UCLA	L	23-27
Oct.	7	Arizona	L	42-45
Oct.	14	at Oregon State	W	36-33
Oct.	21	at Washington State	L	0-28
Oct.	28	California	W	44-28
Nov.	4	at Arizona State	L	30-41
Nov.	11	USC	L	24-38
Nov.	25	at Utah	L	13-34

#Denver

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Davion Taylor, OLB, Magnolia, MS*
2. Dimitri Stanley, ATH, Aurora, CO
3. Dylan Thomas, WR, Los Angeles, CA
4. Daniel Arias, WR, Mill Creek, WA
5. Blake Stenstrom, QB, Highlands Ranch, CO
6. Israel Antwine, DT, Oklahoma City, OK
7. Clyde Moore, ILB, Newport Beach, CA
8. Darrion Jones, TE, Compton, CA*
9. Deion Smith, RB, Houston, TX
10. Delrick Abrams Jr., CB, Angie, LA*

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	PAC-12	NATIONAL
Scoring	26.4 ppg	11	81
Rushing	157.2 ypg	8	74
Passing	260.4 ypg	4	39
Total	417.6 ypg	7	48
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	28.2 ppg	6	74
Rushing	208.0 ypg	10	109
Passing	242.6 ypg	9	95
Total	450.6 ypg	9	110
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
0	0.00	7	64

STAT CORNER

-1.33

CU's average points per trip inside the 40 decreased by 0.65 on offense and increased by 0.68 on defense. That's a minus-1.33 swing — not good.

OFFENSE Since joining the Pac-12 in 2011, the Buffaloes have typically been at or near the bottom of the league in scoring, but co-coordinator Darrin Chiaverini is hoping to change that. He takes over play-calling duties after Brian Lindgren left for Oregon State. Chiaverini's desire is for the Buffs to put defenses on their heels with an up-tempo attack.

Much of that will depend on the development of quarterback Steven Montez. His talent has never been questioned, but his decision making, maturity and ability to read defenses have been. Former South Carolina coordinator Kurt Roper — who mentored Eli Manning at Ole Miss in the early 2000s — was hired to coach quarterbacks.

The Buffs must replace record-setting running back Phillip Lindsay, but grad transfer Travon McMillian is a nice stop-gap. McMillian rushed for 2,153 yards in his career at Virginia Tech and is likely to be the featured back. Redshirt freshman Alex Fontenot could give the Buffs a solid 1-2 punch on the ground.

Despite losing three of the most productive receivers in program history, the Buffs might be better at the position. Juwann Winfree and Laviska Shenault are big, physical targets with speed. They lead a talented crew that also includes Jay MacIntyre, who has been a reliable weapon in the slot the past two years.

If junior guard/center Tim Lynott is fully recovered — as expected — from an Achilles tear and the young talent can grow up quickly, the offensive line has a chance to improve.

DEFENSE Six starters are back as coordinator D.J. Eliot enters his second season, but the Buffs have to be better on this side of the ball. They ranked 109th against the run (208.0 ypg), 102nd in sacks (1.58 per game) and 105th in takeaways (14).

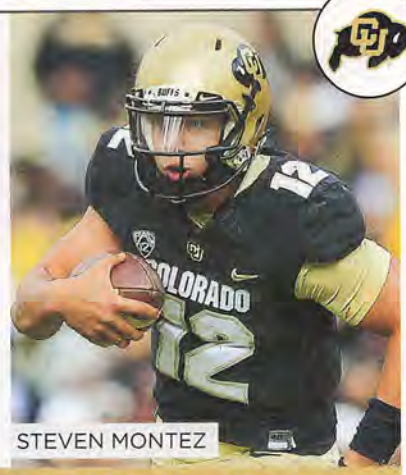
Coach Mike MacIntyre dipped into the junior college ranks once again to find immediate help. Defensive lineman Mustafa Johnson, Buff back Davion Taylor, outside linebacker Alex Tchangam, cornerback Delrick Abrams and safety Aaron Maddox are all likely to play significant roles, if not start, in their first season at CU. The Buffs are also hoping defensive end Terrance Lang and cornerback Chris Miller, both redshirt freshmen, are ready to take on starring roles.

While the Buffs need several newcomers to come through, they'll also lean on experienced veterans such as inside linebackers Rick Gamboa and Drew Lewis and safety Evan Worthington.

The pass rush should be bolstered by Tchangam, the return of Nu'umotu Falo from a dismissal and the development of Jacob Callier.

SPECIALISTS It's been a while since Colorado has felt so good about its kicking game. Sophomore James Stefanou, a former professional soccer player from Australia, was a Lou Groza Award semifinalist in his first season in Boulder. He made 16 of his first 18 attempts before going 1-of-4 the last two games. Alex Kinney is a fourth-year starter at punter.

FINAL ANALYSIS After a South Division title in 2016, Colorado entered last season eager to prove it was more than a one-hit wonder. Instead, the Buffs settled into their familiar spot at the bottom of the division. MacIntyre is only one year removed from winning National Coach of the Year honors and signing a contract extension (through 2021), but there's pressure to get the Buffs back to the postseason. There's enough talent and hunger to get them there, but not much margin for error.



STEVEN MONTEZ

"You look at Colorado and see a program that made a great run in 2016 but might not be able to sustain that. There's still questions about how they fit into the conference in terms of identity."

— An opposing Pac-12 assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (3)

WR	9	Juwann Winfree (Sr.)	17	Kabion Ento (Sr.)	
WR	2	Laviska Shenault (So.)	18	Tony Brown (Jr.)	
WR	14	Jay MacIntyre (Sr.)	3	K.D. Nixon (So.)	
LT	**64**	**Aaron Haigler (Jr.)**	70	Jacob Moretti (Fr.)	
LG	55	Brett Tonz (Jr.)	78	William Sherman (Fr.)	
C	65	Colby Pursell (Fr.)	55	Brett Tonz (Jr.)	
RG	**56**	**Tim Lynott (Jr.)**	60	Dillon Middlemiss (Jr.)	
RT	75	Josh Kaiser (Sr.)	77	Hunter Vaughn (So.)	
TE	44	Chris Bounds (Jr.)	85	Jared Poplawski (So.)	
QB	**12**	**Steven Montez (Jr.)**	4	Sam Noyer (So.)	
RB		Travon McMillian (Sr.)	8	Alex Fontenot (Fr.)	

DEFENSE (6)

DE	34	Mustafa Johnson (So.)	54	Terrance Lang (Fr.)
NT	**33**	**Javier Edwards (Sr.)**	72	Lyle Tuiloma (Jr.)
DE	**16**	**Chris Mulumba (Sr.)**	56	Jase Franke (Sr.)
OLB	44	Jacob Callier (So.)	42	Nu'umotu Falo (Jr.)
ILB	**32**	**Rick Gamboa (Sr.)**	36	Akil Jones (So.)
ILB	**20**	**Drew Lewis (Sr.)**	53	Nate Landman (So.)
BUFF	5	Davion Taylor (Jr.)	21	Kyle Trego (Sr.)
CB	14	Chris Miller (Fr.)	4	Dante Wigley (Jr.)
CB	**8**	**Trey Udoffia (So.)**	1	Delrick Abrams (Jr.)
SS	**6**	**Evan Worthington (Sr.)**	9	Aaron Maddox (So.)
FS	7	Nick Fisher (Sr.)	23	Isaiah Lewis (Fr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	48	James Stefanou (So.)	**KR**	3	K.D. Nixon (So.)
P	89	Alex Kinney (Sr.)	**PR**	2	Ronnie Blackmon (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Steven Montez, 377-228-2,975-9, 18 TDs
Rushing: Steven Montez, 132 att., 338 yds., 3 TDs
Receiving: Jay MacIntyre, 28 rec., 396 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Drew Lewis, 119
Sacks: Drew Lewis, 2.0
Interceptions: Evan Worthington, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mike MacIntyre
Record at School: 25-38 (5 years)
Career Record: 40-59 (8 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Klayton Adams, Darrin Chiaverini
Defensive Coordinator: D.J. Eliot
Boulder, CO • Folsom Field (50,183)

Getty Images

UCLA Bruins

National Forecast: **50** • Pac-12 South Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **6-6, 4-5 Pac-12**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Cincinnati
Sept.	8	at Oklahoma
Sept.	15	Fresno State
Sept.	28	at Colorado
Oct.	6	Washington
Oct.	13	at California
Oct.	20	Arizona
Oct.	26	Utah
Nov.	3	at Oregon
Nov.	10	at Arizona State
Nov.	17	USC
Nov.	24	Stanford

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 6-7, 4-5 PAC-12

Sept.	3	Texas A&M	W	45-44
Sept.	9	Hawaii	W	56-23
Sept.	16	at Memphis	L	45-48
Sept.	23	at Stanford	L	34-58
Sept.	30	Colorado	W	27-23
Oct.	14	at Arizona	L	30-47
Oct.	21	Oregon	W	31-14
Oct.	28	at Washington	L	23-44
Nov.	3	at Utah	L	17-48
Nov.	11	Arizona State	W	44-37
Nov.	18	at USC	L	23-28
Nov.	24	California	W	30-27
Dec.	26	vs. Kansas State #	L	17-35

#Cactus Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Dorian Thompson-Robinson, QB, Las Vegas, NV
2. Bryan Addison, WR, Gardena, CA
3. Chase Cota, WR, Medford, OR
4. Chris Murray, OG, Santa Ana, CA
5. Bo Calvert, OLB, Westlake Village, CA
6. Stephen Blaylock, S, Bellflower, CA
7. Michael Ezeike, WR, Ontario, CA
8. Elijah Wade, LB, Las Vegas, NV
9. Kyle Phillips, WR, San Marcos, CA
10. Tyler Manoa, DT, Mountain View, CA*

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	PAC-12	NATIONAL
Scoring	32.5 ppg	5	36
Rushing	113.4 ypg	11	116
Passing	344.5 ypg	2	4
Total	457.8 ypg	3	22
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	36.6 ppg	11	117
Rushing	287.4 ypg	12	130
Passing	196.3 ypg	2	31
Total	483.7 ypg	12	123
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
-9	-0.69	11	115

STAT CORNER

600

UCLA had zero rushers top 600 yards in a season in either 2016 or '17. Chip Kelly averaged two such rushers per year at Oregon.

OFFENSE It's been close to 20 years since UCLA has owned the front page in Los Angeles, but there's hope that headlines will be returning after the school pulled an offseason coup by landing former Oregon coach Chip Kelly. Though Kelly did not quite find the success he was looking for in the NFL, Pac-12 fans are well aware of his track record with the Ducks, and optimism is running wild in Westwood that he can transform the program and return the Bruins to the top of the standings in short order. Nowhere could the new coach's impact be felt more than on offense, where he will hope to rejuvenate an anemic run game and re-tool just about every position group.

Kelly does inherit a pair of talented (if inconsistent) tailbacks in Bolu Olorunfunmi and Soso Jamabo, but finding a replacement for quarterback Josh Rosen remains priority No. 1 in 2018. Devon Modster is the only signal caller on the roster who has thrown a pass for UCLA, but he'll be pushed by four-star true freshman Dorian Thompson-Robinson (whose dual-threat abilities make him tailor-made for Kelly's offense) or grad transfer Wilton Speight (who is seemingly an odd fit for Kelly's offense).

Junior Theo Howard leads the way at wide receiver. Expect the Bruins to feature tight ends Caleb Wilson (38 catches, 490 yards in five games before a season-ending injury) and Devin Asiasi (a Michigan transfer) in the passing game. Four-star freshman Kyle Philips, an early enrollee, likely will play right away.

Only two starters are back up front as the offensive line remains a glaring weakness, but the quick tempo Kelly uses may help cover that up — to a degree.

DEFENSE UCLA is going through a defensive transition as well, as longtime Kelly assistant Jerry Azzinaro switches the Bruins to a 3-4 alignment. That change will be most noticeable along the line, where there are some quality players but where overall size and depth could be more of an issue than in recent years.

The outlook is better elsewhere on defense. At linebacker, former top recruits Jaelan Phillips and Keisean Lucier-South have an opportunity to thrive coming off the edge. Mique Juarez, a five-star prospect in the class of 2017, is back with the Bruins after leaving the team during preseason camp last summer.

The secondary, coached by the highly respected Paul Rhoads, has a chance to feature several All-Pac-12 selections between seniors Nate Meadors (cornerback) and Adarius Pickett (safety) and talented sophomore corner Darnay Holmes.

SPECIALISTS Kicker JJ Molson made a big jump in efficiency in his sophomore year — 17-of-21 on field goals after making 12-of-20 in 2016 — and could be in line for All-Pac-12 honors this year. Stefan Flintoft earned a scholarship down the stretch last season after solidifying the punting position and averaging 42.9 yards per kick.

FINAL ANALYSIS Kelly is inheriting a full rebuilding job and not a top-25 team like he had when he embarked on his magical run at Oregon. The Bruins do have talent on campus from all those top recruiting classes signed by the previous staff, but there are significant issues on both sides of the ball.

It may not be long before Kelly has the Bruins contending for titles like they did with regularity two decades ago, but there are bound to be a few growing pains in 2018. Even in a wide-open Pac-12 South, this UCLA squad may prove to be more pesky than good as it builds toward a brighter future.



JAELAN PHILLIPS

"(Chip Kelly's) Oregon teams sometimes used speed to compensate for size or physicality. He won't have to do that in Los Angeles."

— An opposing Pac-12 assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (4)					
WR	10	Demetric Felton (So.)	17	Christian Pabico (Sr.)	
WR	14	**Theo Howard (Jr.)**		Kyle Philips (Fr.)	
WR		Chase Cota (Fr.)	9	Dymond Lee (So.)	
LT	75	**Andre James (Jr.)**		Alec Anderson (Fr.)	
LG		Chris Murray (Fr.)	74	Alex Akingbulu (So.)	
C	56	Josh Wariboko-Alali (Jr.)	75	Boss Tagaloa (Jr.)	
RG	55	**Michael Alves (So.)**	60	Zach Sweeney (Fr.)	
RT	73	Jake Burton (So.)	61	Bryan Weitzman (So.)	
TE	81	**Caleb Wilson (Jr.)**	86	Devin Asiasi (So.)	
QB	18	Devon Modster (So.)		D. Thompson-Robinson (Fr.)	
RB	1	Soso Jamabo (Sr.)	4	Bolu Olorunfunmi (Sr.)	
DEFENSE (6)					
DE	90	Rick Wade (Jr.)	85	Moses Robinson-Carr (So.)	
DT	93	**Chigozie Nnoruka (Jr.)**		Atonio Mafi (Fr.)	
DE	92	Osa Odighizuwa (So.)	56	Greg Rogers (So.)	
OLB	15	Jaelan Phillips (So.)	12	Rahyme Johnson (So.)	
ILB	2	Josh Woods (Sr.)	3	Brandon Burton (Jr.)	
ILB	14	**Krys Barnes (Jr.)**	32	Mique Juarez (So.)	
OLB	11	**Keisean Lucier-South (Jr.)**	26	Leni Toailoa (So.)	
CB	1	**Darnay Holmes (So.)**	7	Mo Osling III (Fr.)	
CB	22	**Nate Meadors (Sr.)**	9	Elijah Gates (Fr.)	
SS	6	**Adarius Pickett (Sr.)**	10	Colin Samuel (Jr.)	
FS	37	Quentin Lake (So.)	28	Keyon Riley (So.)	
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K	17	JJ Molson (Jr.)	**KR**	6 Adarius Pickett (Sr.)	
P	20	Stefan Flintoft (Sr.)	**PR**	1 Darnay Holmes (So.)	

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Devon Modster, 79-51-671-0, 4 TDs
Rushing: Bolu Olorunfunmi, 117 att., 565 yds., 5 TDs
Receiving: Theo Howard, 56 rec., 594 yds., 4 TDs
Tackles: Adarius Pickett, 85
Sacks: Jaelan Phillips, 3.5
Interceptions: Darnay Holmes, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Chip Kelly
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: 46-7 (4 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Chip Kelly
Defensive Coordinator: Jerry Azzinaro
Los Angeles, CA • Rose Bowl (91,136)

Peter Brouillet

USC Trojans

National Forecast: **21** • Pac-12 South Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **9-4, 7-2 Pac-12**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	UNLV
Sept.	8	at Stanford
Sept.	15	at Texas
Sept.	21	Washington State
Sept.	29	at Arizona
Oct.	13	Colorado
Oct.	20	at Utah
Oct.	27	Arizona State
Nov.	3	at Oregon State
Nov.	10	California
Nov.	17	at UCLA
Nov.	24	Notre Dame

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 11-3, 8-1 PAC-12

Sept.	2	Western Michigan	W	49-31
Sept.	9	Stanford	W	42-24
Sept.	16	Texas	(ot) W	27-24
Sept.	23	at California	W	30-20
Sept.	29	at Washington State	L	27-30
Oct.	7	Oregon State	W	38-10
Oct.	14	Utah	W	28-27
Oct.	21	at Notre Dame	L	14-49
Oct.	28	at Arizona State	W	48-17
Nov.	4	Arizona	W	49-35
Nov.	11	at Colorado	W	38-24
Nov.	18	UCLA	W	28-23
Dec.	1	vs. Stanford #	W	31-28
Dec.	29	vs. Ohio State %	L	7-24

#Santa Clara %Cotton Bowl Classic

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Amon-Ra St. Brown, WR, Anaheim Hills, CA
2. Palaie Gaoteote, ILB, Las Vegas, NV
3. JT Daniels, QB, Irvine, CA
4. Olaijah Griffin, CB, Long Beach, CA
5. Isaac Taylor-Stuart, CB, San Diego, CA
6. Devon Williams, WR, Lancaster, CA
7. Solomon Tuliaupupu, ILB, Santa Ana, CA
8. Talanoa Hufanga, DB, Corvallis, OR
9. Justin Dedich, C, Temecula, CA
10. Chase Williams, CB, Corona, CA

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	PAC-12	NATIONAL
Scoring	32.6 ppg	4	35
Rushing	185.1 ypg	4	39
Passing	299.0 ypg	3	16
Total	484.1 ypg	2	13
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	26.1 ppg	5	60
Rushing	158.6 ypg	5	56
Passing	237.0 ypg	6	82
Total	395.6 ypg	5	68
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
-2	-0.14	9	80

STAT CORNER

10

Uchenna Nwosu's unique production will be missed: He was one of five players in the FBS to combine 10 TFLs with 10 passes defensed.

OFFENSE USC's offense is undergoing a significant makeover. For the first time since 1980, it replaces a starting quarterback (Sam Darnold), leading rusher (Ronald Jones) and No. 1 wide receiver (Deontay Burnett) in the same offseason. The Trojans have the least experience at quarterback. Redshirt sophomore Matt Fink is the only passer who has appeared in a college game, appearing in mop-up duty for three games last season. Incoming freshman JT Daniels is a talented passer and the reigning Gatorade National Player of the Year. Redshirt freshman Jack Sears had succeeded Darnold previously at San Clemente (Calif.) High School.

Stephen Carr, Aca'Cedric Ware and Vavae Malepeai provide a running-back-by-committee approach to replacing Jones. All three are tough runners. Carr is particularly elusive and a threat as a pass catcher, but Jones' breakaway ability will be tough to match.

The Trojans have a variety of options in the passing game, led by sophomore Tyler Vaughns, who was a capable target with 57 receptions for 809 yards and five touchdowns last season.

Four of five starters return on the offensive line, which could help a first-time starting quarterback and the running game, but USC did allow 30 sacks last season — up from 12 in 2016.

DEFENSE Few defenses were better at pressuring quarterbacks last season than the Trojans, who finished with 46 sacks, tied with Clemson for the most in the nation. The trend may continue in 2018 under defensive coordinator Clancy Pendergast, who could have his best unit since returning to USC in 2016.

The Trojans lose sack leader Rasheem Green on the defensive line, plus Uchenna Nwosu, an outside linebacker who was a disruptive defender, but there is talent left in the front seven. Outside linebacker Porter Gustin, another pass rusher, returns from injury, alongside senior Cameron Smith, the Mike linebacker, and Christian Rector, a wrecking ball on the defensive line.

The Trojans ranked 82nd in the FBS in pass defense last season and surrendered far too many big plays. Senior Iman Marshall will need to continue to develop, along with other veterans, including senior Isaiah Langley and junior Jack Jones, who was withheld from spring practice in order to focus on academics. Safety Marvell Tell was also important against the run and helped out in blitz schemes, but he will be needed to help in pass defense.

SPECIALISTS Chase McGrath and Reid Budrovich, the former walk-on kicker and punter, respectively, are back. McGrath made 12-of-17 field goals, including the game winner in double overtime against Texas. Budrovich was effective pinning opponents inside their 20-yard line, where 23 of his 55 punts landed.

FINAL ANALYSIS Clay Helton is the first coach in the program's history to guide the Trojans to 10 wins in each of his first two seasons, but it is going to be a challenge to continue that level of success with significant roster turnover.

The Trojans should remain the favorites in the Pac-12 South race, considering the talent remaining on their roster and coaching changes that occurred at three of their division rivals. The challenge to repeat as Pac-12 champions gets off to a difficult start with a tough September slate that includes trips to Stanford and Arizona, plus a matchup with Washington State on a Friday night. It won't be an easy road to navigate.



CAMERON SMITH

"Their offensive line got handled in the Cotton Bowl. That game showed how far they still are from being that top-five-level program on offense."

-An opposing Pac-12 assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)					
WR	6	Michael Pittman Jr. (Jr.)	9	Randal Grimes (So.)	
WR	21	**Tyler Vaughns (So.)**	17	Josh Imatorbhebhe (So.)	
WR		Amon-Ra St. Brown (Fr.)	23	Velus Jones (So.)	
LT	73	Austin Jackson (So.)	76	Clayton Johnston (Jr.)	
LG	77	**Chris Brown (Sr.)**	56	Jordan Austin (Sr.)	
C	50	**Toa Lobendahn (Sr.)**	62	Brett Neilon (Fr.)	
RG	72	**Andrew Vorhees (So.)**	68	Alijah Vera-Tucker (Fr.)	
RT	70	**Chuma Edoga (Sr.)**	54	Jalen McKenzie (Fr.)	
TE	82	**Tyler Petite (Sr.)**	88	Daniel Imatorbhebhe (Jr.)	
QB		JT Daniels (Fr.)	13	Jack Sears (Fr.)	
RB	7	Stephen Carr (So.)	28	Aca'Cedric Ware (Sr.)	
DEFENSE (7)					
DE	89	Christian Rector (Jr.)	44	Malik Dorton (Sr.)	
NT	91	Brandon Pili (So.)	51	Marlon Tuipulotu (Fr.)	
OLB	45	Porter Gustin (Sr.)	99	Oluwole Betiku (Jr.)	
ILB	10	**John Houston (Jr.)**	13	Levi Jones (So.)	
MLB	35	**Cameron Smith (Sr.)**		Palaie Gaoteote (Fr.)	
OLB	56	**Jordan Iosefa (Jr.)**	41	Juliano Falaniko (So.)	
CB	8	**Iman Marshall (Sr.)**	9	Greg Johnson (Fr.)	
CB	25	**Jack Jones (Jr.)**	24	Isaiah Langley (Sr.)	
NB	27	**Ajene Harris (Sr.)**	23	Jonathan Lockett (Sr.)	
FS	7	**Marvell Tell (Sr.)**	28	C.J. Pollard (So.)	
SS	14	Ykili Ross (Jr.)	2	Bubba Bolden (So.)	
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K	40	Chase McGrath (So.)	**KR**	23 Velus Jones (So.)	
P	46	Reid Budrovich (Sr.)	**PR**	27 Ajene Harris (Sr.)	

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Matt Fink, 9-6-43-0, 0 TDs
Rushing: Stephen Carr, 65 att., 363 yds., 3 TDs
Receiving: Tyler Vaughns, 57 rec., 809 yds., 5 TDs
Tackles: Cameron Smith, 112
Sacks: Christian Rector, 7.5
Interceptions: Jack Jones, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Clay Helton
Record at School: 27-10 (3+ years)
Career Record: 27-10 (3+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Tee Martin
Defensive Coordinator: Clancy Pendergast
Los Angeles, CA • Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum (93,607)

Peter Brouillet

Utah Utes

National Forecast: **28** • Pac-12 South Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **8-4, 5-4 Pac-12**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	Weber State
Sept.	8	at Northern Illinois
Sept.	15	Washington
Sept.	29	at Washington State
Oct.	6	at Stanford
Oct.	12	Arizona
Oct.	20	USC
Oct.	26	at UCLA
Nov.	3	at Arizona State
Nov.	10	Oregon
Nov.	17	at Colorado
Nov.	24	BYU

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 3-6 PAC-12

Aug.	31	North Dakota	W	37-16
Sept.	9	at BYU	W	19-13
Sept.	16	San Jose State	W	54-16
Sept.	22	at Arizona	W	30-24
Oct.	7	Stanford	L	20-23
Oct.	14	at USC	L	27-28
Oct.	21	Arizona State	L	10-30
Oct.	28	at Oregon	L	20-41
Nov.	3	UCLA	W	48-17
Nov.	11	Washington State	L	25-33
Nov.	18	at Washington	L	30-33
Nov.	25	Colorado	W	34-13
Dec.	26	vs. West Virginia #	W	30-14

#Heart of Dallas Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Jack Tuttle, QB, San Marcos, CA
2. Solomon Enis, WR, Phoenix, AZ
3. Hunter Lotulelei, OG, West Valley City, UT
4. Jackson Cravens, DT, Provo, UT
5. Tareke Lewis, CB, Palatka, FL
6. Malone Mataele, RB, Placentia, CA
7. Bryant Pirtle, LB, Louisville, KY*
8. Paul Maile, DT, Salt Lake City, UT
9. Devin Brumfield, RB, Covington, LA
10. Vonte Davis, CB, Rosenberg, TX*

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	PAC-12	NATIONAL
Scoring	29.5 ppg	9	52
Rushing	164.0 ypg	7	65
Passing	249.4 ypg	7	49
Total	413.4 ypg	8	52
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	23.2 ppg	3	39
Rushing	131.3 ypg	3	27
Passing	207.1 ypg	4	43
Total	338.4 ypg	3	25
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**PAC-12**	**NATIONAL**
+1	+0.08	6	59

STAT CORNER

2

Only two FBS coaches have enjoyed tenures longer than Kyle Whittingham's: Iowa's Kirk Ferentz and TCU's Gary Patterson.

OFFENSE Utah quarterback Tyler Huntley was a surprise choice over returning starter Troy Williams to begin the 2017 season and played well as a sophomore, while missing three conference games and most of another due to injuries. Huntley will have to hold off challenges from highly touted true freshman Jack Tuttle and redshirt freshman Jason Shelley, and the coaches want him to be more judicious in absorbing hits.

Running back Zack Moss was a gauge of Utah's offensive success in 2017. The more he carried the ball, the more productive the Utes became. That was especially true at the end of the season, as he gained 196 yards vs. Colorado and 150 vs. West Virginia in the Heart of Dallas Bowl.

The Utes will miss Darren Carrington II, who gave them one of the best receiving years in school history in his one season as a graduate transfer. The return of Britain Covey from a two-year church mission will help considerably. Covey caught 43 passes for 519 yards as a freshman in 2015 and should fit perfectly into offensive coordinator Troy Taylor's scheme.

Having four new starters on the line was a limiting factor for Utah's offense in 2017, which averaged 413.4 yards per game — down slightly from the 2016 production that resulted in staff changes. Taylor was encouraged by the offense's showing in November, as the Utes scored 30-plus points in wins over UCLA and Colorado and a loss at Washington. The line's growth had a lot to do with that improvement, and having four returning starters is a positive development.

DEFENSE Utah is known for its defensive linemen, annually ranking among the Pac-12's top teams at this position. Bradlee Anae is the star of the group as an athletic end who led the team with seven sacks.

The Utes usually employ two linebackers and must replace both from last season, but Chase Hansen might be the team's best athlete, and Cody Barton has been a part-time starter for two seasons. Originally signed as a QB, Hansen has played mostly at safety.

Marquise Blair was establishing himself at strong safety when he was injured and missed the last month of the season. He tied for fourth on the team in tackles despite playing in only nine games. Corrion Ballard was productive at free safety and intercepted two passes. Defensive coordinator Morgan Scalley, in his 11th season on the staff, believes the Utes have more depth at than ever at cornerback. The top player is Julian Blackmon, whose led the team with four interceptions.

SPECIALISTS The Utes have a knack for finding and developing kickers. Former college soccer player Matt Gay won the Lou Groza Award as the country's top placekicker in his first season of Division I football, making 30-of-34 field goals (going 5-of-6 from 50-plus yards). Punter Mitch Wishnowsky didn't repeat as the Ray Guy Award winner but still had a solid junior season.

FINAL ANALYSIS Utah is entering its eighth season in the Pac-12, and Kyle Whittingham now has been a head coach in this conference longer than he filled that role in the Mountain West. So the Utes are feeling some pressure to win their first Pac-12 South championship. "We are getting closer and closer to where we want to be, but no one cares about being close," Whittingham says. "We have to get over that hump."

The schedule is difficult — the Utes miss Oregon State and California in the rotation — but the pieces are in place for Utah to threaten USC for supremacy in the South.



TYLER HUNTLEY

"They're dangerous, really dangerous when they're at home. Salt Lake is a tougher place to play than people outside the conference probably think."

— An opposing Pac-12 assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)				
WR	8	**Siaosi Mariner (Jr.)**	25	Jaylen Dixon (Fr.)
WR	3	Demari Simpkins (Jr.)		Britain Covey (So.)
WR	45	Samson Nacua (So.)	83	Jameson Field (Sr.)
LT	70	**Jackson Barton (Sr.)**	68	Mo Unutoa (Fr.)
LG	73	Johnny Capra (Jr.)	53	Alani Havili-Katoa (Sr.)
C	69	**Lo Falemaka (Sr.)**	65	Paul Toala (Jr.)
RG	79	**Jordan Agasiva (Sr.)**	50	Orlando Umana (So.)
RT	77	**Darrin Paulo (Jr.)**	55	Nick Ford (Fr.)
TE	44	Jake Jackson (Jr.)	46	Connor Haller (So.)
QB	1	**Tyler Huntley (Jr.)**	14	Jack Tuttle (Fr.)
RB	2	**Zack Moss (Jr.)**	6	Armand Shyne (Jr.)
DEFENSE (4)				
DE	6	**Bradlee Anae (Jr.)**	42	Mika Tafua (Fr.)
LT	99	Leki Fotu (Jr.)	41	Hauati Pututau (So.)
DT	49	Pita Tonga (So.)	52	John Penisini (Jr.)
DE	47	Caleb Repp (Jr.)	92	Maxs Tupai (So.)
LB	30	Cody Barton (Sr.)	3	Donavan Thompson (Jr.)
LB	22	**Chase Hansen (Sr.)**	20	Devin Lloyd (Fr.)
CB	1	Jaylon Johnson (So.)	4	Tyrone Smith (Jr.)
CB	23	**Julian Blackmon (Jr.)**	14	Josh Nurse (Jr.)
NB	28	Javelin Guidry (So.)	5	Tareke Lewis (Jr.)
FS	15	**Corrion Ballard (Sr.)**	2	Philip Afia (Jr.)
SS	13	Marquise Blair (Sr.)	26	Terrell Burgess (Jr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	97	Matt Gay (Sr.)	**KR**	3 Demari Simpkins (Jr.)
P	33	Mitch Wishnowsky (Sr.)	**PR**	Britain Covey (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Tyler Huntley, 312-199-2,411-10, 15 TDs
Rushing: Zack Moss, 214 att., 1,173 yds., 10 TDs
Receiving: Demari Simpkins, 29 rec., 354 yds., 1 TD
Tackles: Chase Hansen, 51
Sacks: Bradlee Anae, 7.0
Interceptions: Julian Blackmon, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Kyle Whittingham
Record at School: 111-56 (13+ years)
Career Record: 111-56 (13+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Troy Taylor
Defensive Coordinator: Morgan Scalley
Salt Lake City, UT • Rice-Eccles Stadium (45,807)

Icon Sportswire via Getty Images

SEC PREVIEW

East	Predicted Order of Finish	West
	1 GEORGIA **BULLDOGS** 12-1, 8-0 SEC	1 ALABAMA **CRIMSON TIDE** 13-0, 8-0 SEC 
	2 FLORIDA **GATORS** 8-4, 5-3 SEC	2 AUBURN **TIGERS** 10-2, 6-2 SEC 
	3 SOUTH CAROLINA **GAMECOCKS** 7-5, 4-4 SEC	3 MISSISSIPPI STATE **BULLDOGS** 9-3, 5-3 SEC 
	4 MISSOURI **TIGERS** 7-5, 3-5 SEC	4 TEXAS A&M **AGGIES** 8-4, 5-3 SEC 
	5 KENTUCKY **WILDCATS** 6-6, 3-5 SEC	5 LSU **TIGERS** 7-5, 4-4 SEC 
	6 TENNESSEE **VOLUNTEERS** 5-7, 2-6 SEC	6 OLE MISS **REBELS** 5-7, 1-7 SEC 
	7 VANDERBILT **COMMODORES** 4-8, 1-7 SEC	7 ARKANSAS **RAZORBACKS** 5-7, 1-7 SEC 

SEC Championship: **Alabama over Georgia**

GAMES TO WATCH

SEPT. 1
AUBURN VS. WASHINGTON
Auburn gets a great opportunity to set the tone in Week 1 against the Pac-12 favorite at Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta.

SEPT. 2
MIAMI (FLA.) VS. LSU
The Tigers will have the nation's attention on Sunday night in prime time at AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas, against a very good Miami team.

SEPT. 15
LSU AT AUBURN
The first significant conference game of the season pits the two Tigers tangling at Jordan-Hare. The home team has won five straight in the series.

SEPT. 22
TEXAS A&M AT ALABAMA
Jimbo Fisher's debut as an SEC head coach will be memorable as the Aggies head to Tuscaloosa to take on Nick Saban and the Crimson Tide.

SEPT. 22
GEORGIA AT MISSOURI
Can Missouri emerge as dark-horse contender in the SEC East? The Tigers will have a golden opportunity when Georgia visits CoMo.

OCT. 13
GEORGIA AT LSU
Matthew Stafford and Knowshon Moreno were leading the way the last time the Dawgs made the trip to Baton Rouge — in October 2008.

Fromm, Bentley, Paul Abell, Scarlett, Chandler, White, Montez; Tom DiPace; Lock, Snell; Tim Umphrey; Shurmur, Tagovailoa, Brown, Harris; Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Stidham: Chris Covatta

2018 Unit Rankings

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
ALABAMA	1	1	3	1	2	1	5
ARKANSAS	12	7	8	12	11	7	9
AUBURN	3	8	6	10	1	2	4
FLORIDA	13	5	7	7	4	8	1
GEORGIA	5	2	5	2	5	4	2
KENTUCKY	14	6	13	8	12	6	8
LSU	11	12	11	6	6	5	3
MISSOURI	2	4	4	3	8	11	13
MISSISSIPPI STATE	4	3	12	4	3	12	6
OLE MISS	8	14	1	5	13	14	12
SOUTH CAROLINA	6	10	2	9	9	9	10
TENNESSEE	10	11	9	13	10	10	11
TEXAS A&M	9	9	10	11	7	3	7
VANDERBILT	7	13	14	14	14	13	14

Recruiting by School

1. Georgia
2. Alabama
3. Auburn
4. Florida
5. LSU
6. Texas A&M
7. South Carolina
8. Tennessee
9. Mississippi State
10. Ole Miss
11. Kentucky
12. Vanderbilt
13. Missouri
14. Arkansas



A.J. BROWN, OLE MISS

2018 Bowl Projections

Cotton Bowl (CFP): Alabama vs. Ohio State

Orange Bowl (CFP): Georgia vs. Clemson

Sugar Bowl: Auburn vs. Oklahoma

Outback Bowl: Florida vs. Purdue

Citrus Bowl: Mississippi State vs. Michigan State

TaxSlayer Bowl: Texas A&M vs. Notre Dame

Belk Bowl: Missouri vs. Virginia Tech

Music City Bowl: South Carolina vs. Maryland

Texas: LSU vs. TCU

Liberty Bowl: Kentucky vs. Oklahoma State

SEC Coordinator Carousel

Alabama: Offense
New: Josh Gattis, Mike Locksley
Old: Brian Daboll, Mike Locksley

Alabama: Defense
New: Tosh Lupoi, Pete Golding
Old: Tosh Lupoi, Jeremy Pruitt

Arkansas: Offense
New: Joe Craddock
Old: Dan Enos

Arkansas: Defense
New: John Chavis
Old: Paul Rhoads

Florida: Offense
New: Billy Gonzales, John Hevesy
Old: Doug Nussmeier

Florida: Defense
New: Todd Grantham
Old: Randy Shannon

LSU: Offense
New: Steve Ensminger
Old: Matt Canada

Missouri: Offense
New: Derek Dooley
Old: Josh Heupel

Mississippi State: Offense
New: Luke Getsy
Old: Billy Gonzales, John Hevesy

Mississippi State: Defense
New: Bob Shoop
Old: Todd Grantham

South Carolina: Offense
New: Bryan McClendon
Old: Bryan McClendon, Kurt Roper

Tennessee: Offense
New: Tyson Helton
Old: Larry Scott

Tennessee: Defense
New: Chris Rumph, Kevin Sherrer
Old: Bob Shoop

Texas A&M: Offense
New: Darrell Dickey
Old: Noel Mazzone

Texas A&M: Defense
New: Mike Elko
Old: John Chavis

Vanderbilt: Defense
New: Jason Tarver
Old: Derek Mason

OCT. 20
ALABAMA AT TENNESSEE
Jeremy Pruitt meets Nick Saban and the Tide for the first time as a head coach. The Vols have not scored more than 20 vs. Alabama since 2003.

OCT. 27
FLORIDA VS. GEORGIA
The Dan Mullen vs. Kirby Smart clashes over the next decade should be fun. Mullen, in Year 1 at Florida, has some catching up to do.

NOV. 3
ALABAMA AT LSU
Ed Orgeron won't win over any of his doubters until he finds a way to beat Alabama — something that the Tigers have not done since 2011.

NOV. 10
AUBURN AT GEORGIA
Auburn has averaged 6.8 points in its six losses and 41.5 points in its two wins in this series dating back to the 2011 season.

NOV. 22
MISSISSIPPI STATE AT OLE MISS
First-year Mississippi State boss Joe Moorhead gets his first taste of the Egg Bowl when the Bulldogs head to Oxford on Thanksgiving night.

NOV. 24
AUBURN AT ALABAMA
Auburn is seeking its first two-game winning streak vs. the hated Tide since Tommy Tuberville capped off his legendary six-game streak in 2007.


KYLE SHURMUR, VANDERBILT

SEC Returning Leaders

Passing	ATT	COMP	PCT	YDS	TD	INT	AVG/G
Drew Lock, Missouri	419	242	57.8	3,964	44	13	304.9
Kyle Shurmur, Vanderbilt	380	220	57.9	2,823	26	10	235.3
Jarrett Stidham, Auburn	370	246	66.5	3,158	18	6	225.6

Rushing	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Benny Snell Jr., Kentucky	262	1,333	5.1	19	71	102.5
Aeris Williams, Mississippi State	236	1,107	4.7	6	59	85.2
Nick Fitzgerald, Mississippi State	162	984	6.1	14	45	82.0

Receiving	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
A.J. Brown, Ole Miss	75	1,252	16.7	11	77	104.3
Emanuel Hall, Missouri	33	817	24.8	8	63	62.8
Bryan Edwards, South Carolina	64	793	12.4	5	41	61.0

Tackles: Devin White, LSU (133); De'Jon Harris, Arkansas (115)
Sacks: Montez Sweat, Mississippi State (10.5); Landis Durham, Texas A&M (10.5)
Interceptions: Mark McLaurin, Mississippi State (6); Andraez Williams, LSU (6)

2017 SEC Standings

EAST	SEC	OVERALL	WEST	SEC	OVERALL
Georgia	7-1	13-2	Auburn	7-1	10-4
South Carolina	5-3	9-4	Alabama	7-1	13-1
Kentucky	4-4	7-6	LSU	6-2	9-4
Missouri	4-4	7-6	Mississippi State	4-4	9-4
Florida	3-5	4-7	Texas A&M	4-4	7-6
Vanderbilt	1-7	5-7	Ole Miss	3-5	6-6
Tennessee	0-8	4-8	Arkansas	1-7	4-8

2017 Bowl Results

Texas Bowl: Texas 33, Missouri 16
Belk Bowl: Wake Forest 55, Texas A&M 52
Music City Bowl: Northwestern 24, Kentucky 23
TaxSlayer Bowl: Mississippi State 31, Louisville 27
Outback Bowl: South Carolina 26, Michigan 19
Peach Bowl: UCF 34, Auburn 27
Citrus Bowl: Notre Dame 21, LSU 17
Rose Bowl (CFP Semifinal): Georgia 54, Oklahoma 48 (2OT)
Sugar Bowl (CFP Semifinal): Alabama 24, Clemson 6
CFP National Championship Game: Alabama 26, Georgia 23 (OT)

2017 SEC TEAM STATS & RANKINGS

OFFENSE

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
ALABAMA	37.1 (2)	250.6 (3)	193.4 (9)	444.1 (4)
ARKANSAS	28.8 (8)	168.0 (7)	205.4 (7)	373.4 (9)
AUBURN	33.9 (4)	218.3 (4)	233.4 (5)	451.6 (3)
FLORIDA	22.1 (13)	156.4 (9)	179.5 (11)	335.9 (13)
GEORGIA	35.4 (3)	258.4 (1)	176.9 (12)	435.3 (5)
KENTUCKY	25.5 (10)	161.7 (8)	188.2 (10)	349.8 (11)
LSU	27.2 (9)	207.6 (5)	203.5 (8)	411.1 (7)
MISSISSIPPI STATE	32.0 (7)	251.7 (2)	166.9 (14)	418.6 (6)
MISSOURI	37.5 (1)	193.5 (6)	308.6 (2)	502.2 (1)
OLE MISS	32.8 (5)	133.9 (11)	328.4 (1)	462.3 (2)
SOUTH CAROLINA	24.2 (12)	122.2 (12)	214.9 (6)	337.1 (12)
TENNESSEE	19.8 (14)	117.4 (13)	173.7 (13)	291.1 (14)
TEXAS A&M	32.7 (6)	155.6 (10)	251.2 (3)	406.8 (8)
VANDERBILT	24.6 (11)	107.2 (14)	243.6 (4)	350.8 (10)

DEFENSE

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
ALABAMA	11.9 (1)	94.7 (1)	165.7 (2)	260.4 (1)
ARKANSAS	36.2 (14)	196.1 (11)	242.2 (12)	438.3 (13)
AUBURN	18.5 (3)	137.0 (5)	182.4 (5)	319.4 (5)
FLORIDA	27.3 (7)	153.9 (7)	195.4 (8)	349.3 (6)
GEORGIA	16.4 (2)	126.0 (2)	168.9 (3)	294.9 (2)
KENTUCKY	28.2 (8)	175.3 (10)	251.6 (13)	426.9 (12)
LSU	18.9 (4)	128.4 (3)	187.6 (6)	316.0 (4)
MISSISSIPPI STATE	20.9 (6)	131.6 (4)	174.7 (4)	306.3 (3)
MISSOURI	31.8 (12)	159.6 (8)	254.5 (14)	414.1 (11)
OLE MISS	34.6 (13)	245.3 (13)	214.2 (9)	459.5 (14)
SOUTH CAROLINA	20.7 (5)	141.1 (6)	226.0 (10)	367.1 (7)
TENNESSEE	29.1 (9)	251.3 (14)	161.7 (1)	412.9 (10)
TEXAS A&M	30.7 (10)	170.9 (9)	237.6 (11)	408.5 (9)
VANDERBILT	31.3 (11)	198.5 (12)	194.6 (7)	393.1 (8)

ALL-SEC TEAM

First-Team Offense

QB	**Tua Tagovailoa**	6-1	218	So.	Alabama
RB	**Damien Harris**	5-11	213	Sr.	Alabama
RB	**Benny Snell**	5-11	223	Jr.	Kentucky
AP	**D'Andre Swift**	5-9	215	So.	Georgia
WR	**A.J. Brown**	6-1	225	Jr.	Ole Miss
WR	**Deebo Samuel**	6-0	210	Sr.	South Carolina
TE	**Albert Okwuegbunam**	6-5	260	So.	Missouri
C	**Ross Pierschbacher**	6-4	301	Sr.	Alabama
OL	**Greg Little**	6-6	325	Jr.	Ole Miss
OL	**Trey Smith**	6-6	320	So.	Tennessee
OL	**Andrew Thomas**	6-5	320	So.	Georgia
OL	**Jonah Williams**	6-5	301	Jr.	Alabama


ROSS PIERSCHBACHER, ALABAMA


J.R. REED, GEORGIA

First-Team Defense

DL	**Terry Beckner**	6-4	305	Sr.	Missouri
DL	**Raekwon Davis**	6-7	308	Jr.	Alabama
DL	**Jeffery Simmons**	6-4	300	Jr.	Mississippi State
DL	**Montez Sweat**	6-6	245	Sr.	Mississippi State
LB	**De'Jon Harris**	6-0	239	Jr.	Arkansas
LB	**Devin White**	6-1	240	Jr.	LSU
LB	**Mack Wilson**	6-2	237	Jr.	Alabama
CB	**Deandre Baker**	5-11	185	Sr.	Georgia
CB	**Andraez Williams**	6-2	182	Jr.	LSU
S	**Mike Edwards**	6-0	201	Sr.	Kentucky
S	**J.R. Reed**	6-1	194	Jr.	Georgia

First-Team Specialists

K	**Rodrigo Blankenship**	6-1	191	Jr.	Georgia
P	**Corey Fatony**	5-11	205	Sr.	Missouri
KR	**Deebo Samuel**	6-0	210	Sr.	South Carolina
P	**Mecole Hardman**	5-11	183	Jr.	Georgia

SECOND-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Drew Lock**	6-4	225	Sr.	Missouri
RB	**Aeris Williams**	6-1	220	Sr.	Mississippi State
RB	**Trayveon Williams**	5-9	200	Jr.	Texas A&M
AP	**Kadarius Toney**	5-11	194	So.	Florida
WR	**Ryan Davis**	5-9	175	Sr.	Auburn
WR	**Jerry Jeudy**	6-1	187	So.	Alabama
TE	**C.J. Conrad**	6-5	252	Sr.	Kentucky
C	**Lamont Gaillard**	6-2	308	Sr.	Georgia
OL	**Paul Adams**	6-6	315	Sr.	Missouri
OL	**Zack Bailey**	6-6	309	Sr.	South Carolina
OL	**Martez Ivey**	6-5	315	Sr.	Florida
OL	**Darryl Williams**	6-2	305	Jr.	Mississippi State

SECOND-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**McTelvin Agim**	6-3	280	Jr.	Arkansas
DL	**Derrick Brown**	6-5	316	Jr.	Auburn
DL	**Landis Durham**	6-3	255	Sr.	Texas A&M
DL	**Cece Jefferson**	6-1	242	Sr.	Florida
LB	**T.J. Brunson**	6-1	225	Jr.	South Carolina
LB	**Deshaun Davis**	5-11	246	Sr.	Auburn
LB	**Tyrel Dodson**	6-2	242	Jr.	Texas A&M
CB	**Jamel Dean**	6-2	215	Jr.	Auburn
CB	**Marco Wilson**	6-0	177	So.	Florida
S	**Chauncey Gardner**	6-0	207	Jr.	Florida
S	**Mark McLaurin**	6-2	215	Sr.	Mississippi State

SECOND-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Daniel LaCamera**	6-4	230	Sr.	Texas A&M
P	**Joseph Charlton**	6-5	187	Jr.	South Carolina
KR	**De'Vion Warren**	5-10	179	So.	Arkansas
PR	**Richaud Floyd**	5-11	190	Jr.	Missouri


Drew Lock
Missouri


Jarrett Stidham
Auburn


McTelvin Agim
Arkansas


Mecole Hardman
Georgia

THIRD-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Jarrett Stidham**	6-3	214	Jr.	Auburn
RB	**Damarea Crockett**	5-11	225	Jr.	Missouri
RB	**Jordan Scarlett**	5-11	206	Jr.	Florida
AP	**Lynn Bowden**	6-1	195	So.	Kentucky
WR	**Terry Godwin**	5-11	185	Sr.	Georgia
WR	**Emanuel Hall**	6-3	200	Sr.	Missouri
TE	**Isaac Nauta**	6-4	240	Jr.	Georgia
C	**Erik McCoy**	6-4	315	Jr.	Texas A&M
OL	**Garrett Brumfield**	6-3	299	Sr.	LSU
OL	**Hjalte Froholdt**	6-5	315	Sr.	Arkansas
OL	**Bruno Reagan**	6-3	315	Sr.	Vanderbilt
OL	**Bunchy Stallings**	6-3	305	Sr.	Kentucky

THIRD-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Tyler Clark**	6-4	300	Jr.	Georgia
DL	**Javon Kinlaw**	6-6	302	Jr.	South Carolina
DL	**Rashard Lawrence**	6-3	300	Jr.	LSU
DL	**D.J. Wonnum**	6-5	258	Jr.	South Carolina
LB	**Josh Allen**	6-5	252	Sr.	Kentucky
LB	**Terez Hall**	6-2	230	Sr.	Missouri
LB	**Natrez Patrick**	6-3	242	Sr.	Georgia
CB	**CJ Henderson**	6-1	186	So.	Florida
CB	**Joejuan Williams**	6-3	208	Jr.	Vanderbilt
S	**Santos Ramirez**	6-2	195	Sr.	Arkansas
S	**Nigel Warrior**	6-0	194	Jr.	Tennessee

THIRD-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Tucker McCann**	6-0	205	Jr.	Missouri
P	**Tommy Townsend**	6-1	175	Jr.	Florida
KR	**Mecole Hardman**	5-11	183	Jr.	Georgia
PR	**Trevon Diggs**	6-2	195	Jr.	Alabama

Shurmur, Pierschbacher, Stidham, Agim, Hardman: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Locke: Tim Umphrey; Reed: Paul Abell

Florida Gators

National Forecast: **17** • SEC East Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **8-4, 5-3 SEC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Charleston Southern
Sept.	8	Kentucky
Sept.	15	Colorado State
Sept.	22	at Tennessee
Sept.	29	at Mississippi State
Oct.	6	LSU
Oct.	13	at Vanderbilt
Oct.	27	vs. Georgia #
Nov.	3	Missouri
Nov.	10	South Carolina
Nov.	17	Idaho
Nov.	24	at Florida State

#Jacksonville, FL

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 4-7, 3-5 SEC

Sept.	2	vs. Michigan #	L	17-33
Sept.	16	Tennessee	W	26-20
Sept.	23	at Kentucky	W	28-27
Sept.	30	Vanderbilt	W	38-24
Oct.	7	LSU	L	16-17
Oct.	14	Texas A&M	L	17-19
Oct.	28	vs. Georgia %	L	7-42
Nov.	4	at Missouri	L	16-45
Nov.	11	at South Carolina	L	20-28
Nov.	18	UAB	W	36-7
Nov.	25	Florida State	L	22-38

#Arlington %Jacksonville

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Jacob Copeland, WR, Pensacola, FL
2. Richard Gouraige, OT, Tampa, FL
3. Emory Jones, QB, LaGrange, GA
4. Justin Watkins, ATH, Clermont, FL
5. Kyle Pitts, TE, Abington, PA
6. Amari Burney, S, Clearwater, FL
7. Trey Dean, ATH, Hampton, GA
8. Dameon Pierce, RB, Bainbridge, GA
9. Andrew Chatfield, LB, Plantation, FL
10. David Reese, DB, Fort Pierce FL

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	22.1 ppg	13	108
Rushing	156.4 ypg	9	75
Passing	179.5 ypg	11	102
Total	335.9 ypg	13	110
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	27.3 ppg	7	69
Rushing	153.9 ypg	7	50
Passing	195.4 ypg	8	28
Total	349.3 ypg	6	31
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
-3	-0.27	11	89

STAT CORNER

2009

The Gators haven't finished in the top 40 in scoring offense in this decade. The last time they did it: 2009, Urban Meyer's last year.

OFFENSE Dan Mullen, Florida's offensive coordinator on two national title teams, plans to return Florida to its high-scoring ways. "I know how important offense is here," he says. "I know everybody likes to score some points. I love scoring points."

Mullen first must find a quarterback. Since Tim Tebow's 2009 departure, no Gators signal caller has accounted for more than 16 TDs in a season. Feleipe Franks had eight interceptions and took 29 sacks in 2017. Fellow redshirt sophomore Kyle Trask, Florida's best pure passer, will push him for snaps.

Whoever's under center should benefit from a solid run game. Junior Jordan Scarlett has a chance to become a 1,000-yard rusher. The backfield, though, is crowded. Junior Lamical Perine is an SEC-caliber back, while sophomore Adarius Lemons has big-play potential.

Receivers Tyrie Cleveland and Kadarius Toney are talented but injury prone. The rest of the unit has underachieved. The eligibility rulings on transfers Van Jefferson (Ole Miss) and Trevon Grimes (Ohio State) could be game changers.

UF's success ultimately hinges on the offensive line. The unit returns five starters, led by senior left tackle Martez Ivey. But many of those returners have struggled too often the past two seasons.

DEFENSE The Gators ranked outside the nation's top-15 defenses for the first time since 2007 and ended the season in disarray. Florida yielded 87 points during back-to-back losses to Georgia and Missouri and allowed 38 points to struggling Florida State.

New coordinator Todd Grantham does inherit some nice pieces, led by a stable of pass rushers and two lockdown cornerbacks.

Ends Cece Jefferson, Jabari Zuniga, Jachai Polite and Antonneous Clayton could thrive in Grantham's 3-4 scheme. Massive sophomore tackle Tedarrell Slaton (6'4", 358) has the skills to dominate inside.

At linebacker, David Reese finished last season with 102 tackles. The rest of the unit managed 125. Little-used junior Rayshad Jackson emerged during spring practices.

Cornerbacks Marco Wilson and CJ Henderson are among the SEC's top duos. Junior Chauncey Gardner-Johnson moves from safety to nickel back, where his speed allows him to disrupt the middle of the field and rush off the edge. Junior safety Jeawon Taylor has good range but an injury history. Keep an eye on versatile sophomore Brad Stewart.

SPECIALISTS Johnny Townsend, who led the nation in punting the last two seasons, and kicker Eddy Pineiro, who hit his final 16 field goals at Florida, will be hard to replace. Townsend's brother, Tommy, and freshman Evan McPherson, the nation's top-rated prep kicker, are next up. Florida hopes Lemons can improve field position on kickoffs and that Toney will shine on a punt-return unit ranked last in the SEC.

FINAL ANALYSIS Mullen embraces the incredible expectations that drove his former boss, Urban Meyer, to retire for a season and cost Will Muschamp and McElwain their jobs at Florida. Mullen's ability to develop quarterbacks is critical given the long-standing issues under center. He and his staff must prove to be strong recruiters to rebuild Florida's talent level and depth after four straight classes outside the top 10. The 46-year-old will benefit from a favorable schedule. Doubling last season's total of four wins is within reach.



JORDAN SCARLETT

"They have made some mistakes in recruiting. Player development is something they didn't do a great job of either. But Florida doesn't lack for talent."

— An opposing SEC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (10)

WR	87	Van Jefferson (Jr.)	**10**	**Josh Hammond (Jr.)**
WR	**89**	**Tyrie Cleveland (Jr.)**	16	Freddie Swain (Jr.)
WR	17	Kadarius Toney (So.)	9	Dre Massey (Sr.)
LT	**73**	**Martez Ivey (Sr.)**	55	Noah Banks (Jr.)
LG	**61**	**Brett Heggie (So.)**	64	Tyler Jordan (Sr.)
C	**59**	**T.J. McCoy (Jr.)**	66	Nick Buchanan (Jr.)
RG	**74**	**Fred Johnson (Sr.)**	75	T.J. Moore (Fr.)
RT	**65**	**Jawaan Taylor (Jr.)**	72	Stone Forsythe (So.)
TE	**80**	**C'yontai Lewis (Sr.)**	45	R.J. Raymond (Sr.)
QB	**13**	**Feleipe Franks (So.)**	11	Kyle Trask (So.)
RB	25	Jordan Scarlett (Jr.)	**22**	**Lamical Perine (Jr.)**

DEFENSE (6)

DE	92	Jabari Zuniga (Jr.)	94	Zachary Carter (Fr.)
NT	**54**	**Khairi Clark (Sr.)**	57	Elijah Conliffe (So.)
DT	56	Tedarrell Slaton (So.)	98	Luke Ancrum (Jr.)
RUSH	**96**	**Cece Jefferson (Sr.)**	99	Jachai Polite (Jr.)
ILB	**33**	**David Reese (Jr.)**	28	Kylan Johnson (Jr.)
ILB	44	Rayshad Jackson (Jr.)	**11**	**Vosean Joseph (Jr.)**
CB	**3**	**Marco Wilson (So.)**	35	Trey Dean (Fr.)
CB	5	CJ Henderson (So.)	6	Brian Edwards (So.)
NB	**23**	**C. Gardner-Johnson (Jr.)**	13	Donovan Stiner (So.)
S	2	Brad Stewart (So.)	30	Amari Burney (Fr.)
S	29	Jeawon Taylor (Jr.)	31	Shawn Davis (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K		Evan McPherson (Fr.)	**KR**	32 Adarius Lemons (So.)
P	88	Tommy Townsend (Jr.)	**PR**	17 Kadarius Toney (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Feleipe Franks, 229-125-1,438-8, 9 TDs
Rushing: Lamical Perine, 136 att., 562 yds., 8 TDs
Receiving: Tyrie Cleveland, 22 rec., 410 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: David Reese, 102
Sacks: Cece Jefferson, 4.5
Interceptions: CJ Henderson, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Dan Mullen
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: 69-46 (9 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Billy Gonzales, John Hevesy
Defensive Coordinator: Todd Grantham
Gainesville, FL • Ben Hill Griffin Stadium (88,548)

Tom DiPace

Georgia **Bulldogs**

National Forecast: **3** • SEC East Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **12-1, 8-0 SEC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Austin Peay
Sept.	8	at South Carolina
Sept.	15	Middle Tennessee
Sept.	22	at Missouri
Sept.	29	Tennessee
Oct.	6	Vanderbilt
Oct.	13	at LSU
Oct.	27	vs Florida #
Nov.	3	at Kentucky
Nov.	10	Auburn
Nov.	17	Massachusetts
Nov.	24	Georgia Tech

#Jacksonville, FL

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 13-2, 7-1 SEC

Sept.	2	Appalachian State	W	31-10
Sept.	9	at Notre Dame	W	20-19
Sept.	16	Samford	W	42-14
Sept.	23	Mississippi State	W	31-3
Sept.	30	at Tennessee	W	41-0
Oct.	7	at Vanderbilt	W	45-14
Oct.	14	Missouri	W	53-28
Oct.	28	vs. Florida #	W	42-7
Nov.	4	South Carolina	W	24-10
Nov.	11	at Auburn	L	17-40
Nov.	18	Kentucky	W	42-13
Nov.	25	at Georgia Tech	W	38-7
Dec.	2	vs. Auburn %	W	28-7
Jan.	1	vs. Oklahoma & (ot)	W	54-48
Jan.	8	vs. Alabama $ (ot)	L	23-26

#Jacksonville %Atlanta &Rose Bowl
$CFB Playoff Championship Game

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Justin Fields, QB, Kennesaw, GA
2. Zamir White, RB, Laurinburg, NC
3. Jamaree Salyer, OG, Atlanta, GA
4. Tyson Campbell, CB, Plantation, FL
5. Adam Anderson, OLB, Rome GA
6. Cade Mays, OT, Knoxville, TN
7. Brenton Cox, DE, Stockbridge, GA
8. Jaquavian Walker, OLB, Cordele, GA
9. James Cook, RB, Miami, FL
10. Luke Ford, TE, Carterville, IL

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	35.4 ppg	3	20
Rushing	258.4 ypg	1	9
Passing	176.9 ypg	12	106
Total	435.3 ypg	5	32
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	16.4 ppg	2	6
Rushing	126.0 ypg	2	20
Passing	168.9 ypg	3	8
Total	294.9 ypg	2	6
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
+4	+0.27	4	44

STAT CORNER

+2.0

UGA outgained its opponents by an average of 2.0 yards per play — the fourth-best margin in the nation.

OFFENSE Kirby Smart wants Georgia to be known as a physical, run-oriented team, and that was the character of the offense that almost won a national championship last year. But this year's team has the potential to be much more balanced.

The two star tailbacks, Nick Chubb and Sony Michel, are gone, but the team still has D'Andre Swift, freshman Zamir White and other talented backs. And it has a bigger and more experienced offensive line that can create holes.

The Bulldogs have a returning QB in Jake Fromm who showed last year that he could do plenty of good things with his arm. He was accurate (62.2 percent completion rate) and better than given credit for on long throws. Georgia also has solid playmaking receivers (Mecole Hardman, Terry Godwin and Riley Ridley).

This also assumes that Fromm is the starter the whole way this season. True freshman Justin Fields was a five-star recruit who enrolled early and gives Georgia a great dual-threat option, the kind Smart has hungered for since seeing Clemson's Deshaun Watson carve up his defense at Alabama. Georgia's offense, in other words, has the potential to carry the team, in a way it hasn't since earlier this decade.

DEFENSE Georgia lost eight of the players who started on defense in the College Football Playoff, including all four linebackers. That included Roquan Smith, a once-a-decade-type inside linebacker. That doesn't mean Georgia can't still be very good on defense in 2018, though. Smart and defensive coordinator Mel Tucker have plenty of talent to draw on. They have a base that includes shut-down cornerback Deandre Baker, safety J.R. Reed, defensive linemen Jonathan Ledbetter and Tyler Clark — as well as inside linebacker Natrez Patrick, who battled off-field problems but is back for his senior year.

There is also plenty of talent coming up through the system, whether it's bench players from last year — outside linebackers Walter Grant and D'Andre Walker — or five-star recruits such as cornerback Tyson Campbell.

The main questions will be in the secondary, particularly opposite Baker, and defensive line, which isn't as deep as last year. And, of course, the impact of the loss of Smith's playmaking ability and all that veteran experience and leadership.

SPECIALISTS In the postseason, placekicker Rodrigo Blankenship made two field goals of 50-plus yards, which no one had ever done. He's back for his junior year and could be an All-American. Georgia also returns Hardman, who didn't have a return touchdown last year but always seemed very close to breaking one. Punter will be an issue, however, after the loss of Cam Nizialek and his strong right leg. Of course, if the offense is as good as Georgia hopes, Nizialek's replacement may not be called upon much.

FINAL ANALYSIS Georgia doesn't have the experience coming back that it did last year, but it may have as much talent. It's just younger and inexperienced talent, and that does matter, and would be a reason not to expect another CFB Playoff run. Then again, the schedule is far from daunting. Georgia has to go to LSU, and September games at South Carolina and Missouri could be troublesome. Auburn visits Athens.

Georgia should be a heavy favorite to repeat as SEC East champion. Everything else probably depends on how quickly the defense reloads.



JAKE FROMM

"I don't know that I've ever seen a team make the strides from one year to the next that Georgia did. I don't think that was a fluke by any stretch."

— An opposing SEC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)

WR	5	**Terry Godwin (Sr.)**	87	Tyler Simmons (Jr.)	
WR	4	Mecole Hardman (Jr.)	25	Ahkil Crumpton (Sr.)	
WR	8	**Riley Ridley (Jr.)**	9	Jeremiah Holloman (So.)	
LT	71	**Andrew Thomas (So.)**	78	D'Marcus Hayes (Jr.)	
LG	65	**Kendall Baker (Sr.)**		Jamaree Salyer (Fr.)	
C	53	**Lamont Gaillard (Sr.)**	50	Warren Ericson (Fr.)	
RG	74	Ben Cleveland (So.)	**66**	**Solomon Kindley (So.)**	
RT	79	Isaiah Wilson (Fr.)	77	Cade Mays (Fr.)	
TE	18	**Isaac Nauta (Jr.)**	89	Charlie Woerner (Jr.)	
QB	11	**Jake Fromm (So.)**	1	Justin Fields (Fr.)	
RB	7	D'Andre Swift (So.)	13	Elijah Holyfield (Jr.)	

DEFENSE (5)

DE	13	**Jonathan Ledbetter (Sr.)**	51	David Marshall (Jr.)	
DT	52	**Tyler Clark (Jr.)**	76	Michail Carter (Jr.)	
NT	5	Julian Rochester (Jr.)	96	DaQuan Hawkins-Muckle (Sr.)	
OLB	84	Walter Grant (So.)	1	Brenton Cox (Fr.)	
ILB	6	**Natrez Patrick (Sr.)**	30	Tae Crowder (Jr.)	
ILB	32	Monty Rice (So.)	44	Juwan Taylor (Sr.)	
OLB	15	D'Andre Walker (Sr.)	33	Robert Beal (Fr.)	
CB	18	**Deandre Baker (Sr.)**	23	Mark Webb (So.)	
CB	26	Tyrique McGhee (Jr.)		Tyson Campbell (Fr.)	
FS	2	Richard LeCounte (So.)	12	Tray Bishop (Fr.)	
SS	20	**J.R. Reed (Jr.)**	19	Jarvis Wilson (Sr.)	

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	98	Rodrigo Blankenship (Jr.)	KR	4	Mecole Hardman (Jr.)
P		Jake Camarda (Fr.)	PR	4	Mecole Hardman (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Jake Fromm, 291-181-2,615-7, 24 TDs
Rushing: D'Andre Swift, 81 att., 618 yds., 3 TDs
Receiving: Terry Godwin, 38 rec. 639 yds., 6 TDs
Tackles: J.R. Reed, 79
Sacks: D'Andre Walker, 5.5
Interceptions: Deandre Baker, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Kirby Smart
Record at School: 21-7 (2 years)
Career Record: 21-7 (2 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Jim Chaney, James Coley
Defensive Coordinator: Mel Tucker
Athens, GA • Sanford Stadium (92,746)

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

Kentucky **Wildcats**

National Forecast: **55** • SEC East Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **6-6, 3-5 SEC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Central Michigan
Sept.	8	at Florida
Sept.	15	Murray State
Sept.	22	Mississippi State
Sept.	29	South Carolina
Oct.	6	at Texas A&M
Oct.	20	Vanderbilt
Oct.	27	at Missouri
Nov.	3	Georgia
Nov.	10	at Tennessee
Nov.	17	Middle Tennessee
Nov.	24	at Louisville

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 4-4 SEC

Sept.	2	at Southern Miss	W	24-17
Sept.	9	Eastern Kentucky	W	27-16
Sept.	16	at South Carolina	W	23-13
Sept.	23	Florida	L	27-28
Sept.	30	Eastern Michigan	W	24-20
Oct.	7	Missouri	W	40-34
Oct.	21	at Mississippi State	L	7-45
Oct.	28	Tennessee	W	29-26
Nov.	4	Ole Miss	L	34-37
Nov.	11	at Vanderbilt	W	44-21
Nov.	18	at Georgia	L	13-42
Nov.	25	Louisville	L	17-44
Dec.	29	vs. Northwestern #	L	23-24

#Music City Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Marquan McCall, DL, Detroit, MI
2. Darian Kinnard, OT, Cleveland, OH
3. Chris Oats, OLB, Cincinnati, OH
4. Stanley Garner, CB, Parkway, FL
5. DeAndre Square, LB, Detroit, MI
6. Terry Wilson, QB, Oklahoma City, OK
7. Brenden Bates, TE, Cincinnati, OH
8. Quintin Wilson, C, Cincinnati, OH
9. Marvin Alexander, WR, Miami Gardens, FL
10. Keaton Upshaw, TE, Lima, OH

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	25.5 ppg	10	87
Rushing	161.7 ypg	8	68
Passing	188.2 ypg	10	97
Total	349.8 ypg	11	103
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	28.2 ppg	8	74
Rushing	175.3 ypg	10	79
Passing	251.6 ypg	13	103
Total	426.9 ypg	12	92
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
+3	+0.23	5	46

STAT CORNER

.217

In five seasons, Mark Stoops is 21-18 before November (win pct.: .538) but only 5-18 in November and beyond (.217).

OFFENSE Kentucky's biggest question entering the 2018 season lies at its most important position: No quarterback on the roster has ever played in an FBS game.

Junior college transfer Terry Wilson, who began his career at Oregon, and sophomore Gunnar Hoak ended the spring as the leaders for the starting job. Hoak, a more traditional pro-style quarterback, has the benefit of two years with the playbook even though he has yet to make his collegiate debut. Wilson might be the better fit for the Wildcats' read-option offense thanks to his running ability.

Whoever wins the quarterback job should be boosted by a strong rushing attack anchored by star junior Benny Snell, the first player in program history to rush for at least 1,000 yards in consecutive seasons, and a veteran offensive line that returns four starters. Snell could break the program's career rushing record with a strong junior season.

An inconsistent group of wide receivers will need to make major strides. Senior Dorian Baker, who missed the 2017 season with an ankle injury, junior Tavin Richardson and sophomore Lynn Bowden will be counted on to carry much of the load alongside potential All-SEC tight end C.J. Conrad.

DEFENSE Kentucky returns eight starters on defense, offering hope for improvement for a unit that ranked 92nd nationally in yards allowed per game last season. Two of those returning starters, senior outside linebacker Josh Allen and senior safety Mike Edwards, both considered entering the NFL Draft before ultimately deciding to spend another year in Lexington.

With Allen and fellow senior outside linebacker Denzil Ware returning, Kentucky moved Josh Paschal from outside backer to end this spring in an effort to get its best 11 defenders on the field at the same time. Paschal should add a much-needed pass-rushing presence to the defensive line alongside sophomore nose guard Quinton Bohanna, who seized the starting job over two seniors as a freshman late in the 2017 season.

Senior weak-side linebacker Jordan Jones returns after a tumultuous 2017 season marred by injury and multiple off-field incidents. Still, Jones is just a year removed from totaling 109 tackles and 15.5 tackles for a loss as a sophomore. Depth on the inside is a concern.

A veteran secondary has yet to fulfill the hype that had coach Mark Stoops call the group "superstars in the making" after their freshman season, but the four seniors who generated that excitement have one more year to prove worthy of that praise. Edwards has more than held his own, leading all SEC defensive backs in tackles the last two seasons. Now Darius West, Derrick Baity, Chris Westry and Lonnie Johnson must match that level of play.

SPECIALISTS Kentucky will likely turn to two 2018 signees, Chance Poore and Max Duffy, to replace Austin MacGinnis, the best kicker in program history, and Matt Panton at the two specialist positions this fall. Behind quarterback, placekicker might be the biggest question on the roster.

FINAL ANALYSIS If Kentucky can find a competent quarterback, there is enough experienced talent at the other positions to envision the Wildcats breaking through the seven-win plateau for the first time in the Stoops era. If not, the Wildcats could be in danger of taking a step back by either falling to a lesser bowl than the last two seasons or missing postseason play altogether.



BENNY SNELL

"They have gone .500 in the SEC two years in a row. Any time you can do that at Kentucky, you are doing something right."

— An opposing SEC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	2	Dorian Baker (Sr.)	82	Josh Ali (So.)	
WR	1	Lynn Bowden (So.)	18	Clevan Thomas (So.)	
WR	11	**Tavin Richardson (Jr.)**	81	Isaiah Epps (So.)	
LT	67	Landon Young (Jr.)	72	E.J. Price (So.)	
LG	71	**Logan Stenberg (Jr.)**	79	Luke Fortner (So.)	
C	52	**Drake Jackson (So.)**	65	Bunchy Stallings (Sr.)	
RG	65	**Bunchy Stallings (Sr.)**	77	Mason Wolfe (Jr.)	
RT	64	**George Asafo-Adjei (Sr.)**	66	Naasir Watkins (Fr.)	
TE	87	**C.J. Conrad (Sr.)**	83	Justin Rigg (Jr.)	
QB	3	Terry Wilson (So.)	12	Gunnar Hoak (So.)	
RB	26	**Benny Snell (Jr.)**	22	Sihiem King (Sr.)	

DEFENSE (8)

DE	99	**Adrian Middleton (Sr.)**	92	Phil Hoskins (Jr.)
NG	95	Quinton Bohanna (So.)	98	Tymere Dubose (Sr.)
DE	4	Josh Paschal (So.)	90	**T.J. Carter (Jr.)**
OLB	35	Denzil Ware (Sr.)	20	Kengera Daniel (Sr.)
MLB	56	Kash Daniel (Jr.)		Christopher Oats (Fr.)
WLB	34	**Jordan Jones (Sr.)**	44	Jamin Davis (Fr.)
SLB	41	**Josh Allen (Sr.)**	31	Boogie Watson (So.)
CB	8	**Derrick Baity (Sr.)**	6	Lonnie Johnson (Sr.)
CB	21	**Chris Westry (Sr.)**	3	Jordan Griffin (Jr.)
S	7	**Mike Edwards (Sr.)**	17	Tobias Gilliam (So.)
S	25	**Darius West (Sr.)**	9	Davonte Robinson (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K		Chance Poore (Fr.)	**KR**	1	Lynn Bowden (So.)
P	93	Max Duffy (So.)	**PR**	1	Lynn Bowden (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Lynn Bowden, 4-3-92-1, 0 TDs
Rushing: Benny Snell Jr., 262 att., 1,333 yds., 19 TDs
Receiving: Tavin Richardson, 27 rec., 371 yds., 1 TD
Tackles: Mike Edwards, 97
Sacks: Josh Allen, 7.0
Interceptions: Mike Edwards, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mark Stoops
Record at School: 26-36 (5 years)
Career Record: 26-36 (5 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Eddie Gran, Darin Hinshaw
Defensive Coordinator: Matt House
Lexington, KY • Kroger Field (61,000)

Tim Umphrey

Missouri Tigers

National Forecast: **30** • SEC East Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **7-5, 3-5 SEC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Tennessee-Martin
Sept.	8	Wyoming
Sept.	15	at Purdue
Sept.	22	Georgia
Oct.	6	at South Carolina
Oct.	13	at Alabama
Oct.	20	Memphis
Oct.	27	Kentucky
Nov.	3	at Florida
Nov.	10	Vanderbilt
Nov.	17	at Tennessee
Nov.	24	Arkansas

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 4-4 SEC

Sept.	2	Missouri State	W	72-43
Sept.	9	South Carolina	L	13-31
Sept.	16	Purdue	L	3-35
Sept.	23	Auburn	L	14-51
Oct.	7	at Kentucky	L	34-40
Oct.	14	at Georgia	L	28-53
Oct.	21	Idaho	W	68-21
Oct.	28	at Connecticut	W	52-12
Nov.	4	Florida	W	45-16
Nov.	11	Tennessee	W	50-17
Nov.	18	at Vanderbilt	W	45-17
Nov.	24	at Arkansas	W	48-45
Dec.	27	vs. Texas #	L	16-33

#Texas Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Chad Bailey, ILB, Missouri City, TX
2. Kam Scott, WR, Manvel, TX
3. Jalen Knox, RB, Mansfield, TX
4. Daniel Parker, DE, Blue Springs, MO
5. Danny Gray, WR, Dallas, TX
6. Lindsey Scott Jr., QB, Zachary, LA*
7. Antar Thompson, DT, Saint Louis, MO*
8. Jatorian Hansford, OLB, Forsyth, GA
9. Gerald Nathan Jr., ILB, Charlotte, NC
10. Messiah Swinson, TE, Glen Head, NY

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	37.5 ppg	1	14
Rushing	193.5 ypg	6	36
Passing	308.6 ypg	2	14
Total	502.2 ypg	1	8
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	31.8 ppg	12	93
Rushing	159.6 ypg	8	58
Passing	254.5 ypg	14	107
Total	414.1 ypg	11	83
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
-8	-0.62	14	111

STAT CORNER

31.7

In four years as a defensive coordinator, Barry Odom's teams allowed 22.2 points per game. In two years as a head coach: 31.7.

OFFENSE In late September 2017, Barry Odom was the captain of a sinking ship. Following disheartening losses to Purdue and Auburn, it appeared fair to wonder if Odom would even finish his second year in charge in Columbia. Mizzou began the season 1–5. Six games, six wins and a Texas Bowl bid later, Odom's seat was cool, offensive coordinator Josh Heupel was leaving for the UCF head coaching job, and quarterback Drew Lock was taking his time deciding whether to leave for the NFL or return to Columbia.

Lock waited to make his decision until Odom had made his coordinator replacement: former Tennessee head coach and Dallas Cowboys receivers coach Derek Dooley. Dooley offered a path to merge the worlds of pro-style offense with the run-game-and-deep-balls approach that worked so well over the second half of 2017, and Lock elected to return and improve his draft stock.

If Dooley's play calling is up to snuff, Mizzou returns a lot of weapons for Lock. The Tigers have to replace No. 1 receiver J'Mon Moore but bring back nearly everybody else. Emanuel Hall had 817 yards (at a ridiculous 24.8 yards per catch) and eight TDs despite battling injury. Sophomore Albert Okwuegbunam is a potential all-conference tight end and a massive red zone threat. Slot receiver Johnathon Johnson has 1,159 receiving yards in two years.

The running back duo of Damarea Crockett (1,062 yards in 2016) and Larry Rountree III (703 in 2017, as Crockett battled injury) could be dynamite, and a line that was almost never pushed backward returns every starter. New line coach Brad Davis inherits players who accounted for 61 of last year's 65 starts, including star right tackle Paul Adams.

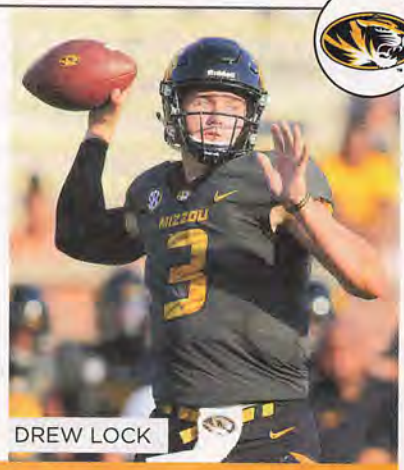
DEFENSE "D-Line Zou" became the calling card of Gary Pinkel's last few defenses, and tackle Terry Beckner Jr. should make it eight d-linemen drafted in seven years next spring. Finally healthy after two season-ending knee injuries in two seasons, Beckner had 8.5 tackles for a loss during Mizzou's win streak. He will be the anchor for one of the league's best defensive tackle units, one that includes Texas transfer and former blue-chipper Jordan Elliott. The end position, however, appears as thin as the tackle position is loaded.

The linebacking corps is stocked. The trio of Terez Hall, Cale Garrett and Brandon Lee combined for 27.5 TFLs, 4.5 sacks and 10 passes defensed. Defensive coordinator Ryan Walters' attack will utilize the nickel back quite a bit, but Lee is solid enough in pass coverage to make the nickel back a luxury instead of a necessity.

At cornerback, junior DeMarkus Acy and sophomore Adam Sparks return after a down-then-up season, but there's been turnover at safety. Anthony Sherrils graduated, and Kaleb Prewett's status is uncertain after a spring suspension.

SPECIALISTS Special teams went from weakness to strength in 2017. Punter Corey Fatony returns for a fourth year of mostly excellent kicks, placekicker Tucker McCann overcame his freshman yips by making 15-of-17 field goals as a sophomore, and punt returner Richaud Floyd returned two punts for scores and averaged 19.8 yards per return. This should be one of the SEC's better units.

FINAL ANALYSIS There's just enough turnover to give one pause, but most of the reasons for last year's second-half surge return. That suggests a pretty high floor in a division that features quite a few teams that bottomed out in 2017.



DREW LOCK

"The Derek Dooley hire (at offensive coordinator) was off the radar. ... I don't necessarily think it was a bad hire. Just surprising."

— An opposing SEC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (9)

WR	**84**	**Emanuel Hall (Sr.)**		Kam Scott (Fr.)
WR	7	Nate Brown (Sr.)	82	Harry Ballard (So.)
WR	**87**	**Johnathon Johnson (Jr.)**	17	Richaud Floyd (Jr.)
LT	**70**	**Yasir Durant (Jr.)**	50	Hyrin White (Fr.)
LG	**71**	**Kevin Pendleton (Sr.)**	59	Case Cook (Fr.)
C	**55**	**Trystan Colon-Castillo (So.)**	67	Jonah Dubinski (Jr.)
RG	**75**	**Tre'vour Wallace-Simms (Jr.)**	56	Samson Bailey (Sr.)
RT	**77**	**Paul Adams (Sr.)**	79	Larry Borom (Fr.)
TE	**81**	**Albert Okwuegbunam (So.)**	11	Kendall Blanton (Sr.)
QB	**3**	**Drew Lock (Sr.)**	2	Micah Wilson (So.)
RB	16	Damarea Crockett (Jr.)	33	Larry Rountree (So.)

DEFENSE (6)

DE	93	Tre Williams (So.)	29	Nate Anderson (Sr.)
DT	**5**	**Terry Beckner Jr. (Sr.)**	13	Rashad Brandon (Sr.)
DT	95	Jordan Elliott (So.)	78	Kobie Whiteside (So.)
DE	39	Chris Turner (So.)		Daniel Parker (Fr.)
LB	**24**	**Terez Hall (Sr.)**	22	Aubrey Miller (So.)
LB	**47**	**Cale Garrett (Jr.)**	25	Jamal Brooks (So.)
NB	**4**	**Brandon Lee (Sr.)**	18	Joshuah Bledsoe (So.)
CB	**2**	**DeMarkus Acy (Jr.)**	1	Tyrone Collins (Fr.)
CB	**14**	**Adam Sparks (So.)**	21	Christian Holmes (So.)
FS	7	Cam Hilton (Sr.)	10	Tyree Gillespie (So.)
SS	3	Ronnell Perkins (Jr.)	11	Jordan Ulmer (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	19	Tucker McCann (Jr.)	**KR**	33	Larry Rountree (So.)
P	26	Corey Fatony (Sr.)	**PR**	17	Richaud Floyd (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Drew Lock, 419-242-3,964-13, 44 TDs
Rushing: Larry Rountree III, 126 att., 703 yds., 6 TDs
Receiving: Johnathon Johnson, 41 rec., 724 yds., 6 TDs
Tackles: Cale Garrett, 105
Sacks: Terry Beckner Jr., 7.0
Interceptions: Cale Garrett, 2; Adam Sparks, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Barry Odom
Record at School: 11-14 (2 years)
Career Record: 11-14 (2 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Derek Dooley
Defensive Coordinator: Ryan Walters
Columbia, MO • Memorial Stadium (71,168)

Tim Umphrey

South Carolina Gamecocks

National Forecast: **28** • SEC East Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **7-5, 4-4 SEC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Coastal Carolina
Sept.	8	Georgia
Sept.	15	Marshall
Sept.	22	at Vanderbilt
Sept.	29	at Kentucky
Oct.	6	Missouri
Oct.	13	Texas A&M
Oct.	27	Tennessee
Nov.	3	at Ole Miss
Nov.	10	at Florida
Nov.	17	Chattanooga
Nov.	24	at Clemson

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 9-4, 5-3 SEC

Sept.	2	vs. NC State #	W	35-28
Sept.	9	at Missouri	W	31-13
Sept.	16	Kentucky	L	13-23
Sept.	23	Louisiana Tech	W	17-16
Sept.	30	at Texas A&M	L	17-24
Oct.	7	Arkansas	W	48-22
Oct.	14	at Tennessee	W	15-9
Oct.	28	Vanderbilt	W	34-27
Nov.	4	at Georgia	L	10-24
Nov.	11	Florida	W	28-20
Nov.	18	Wofford	W	31-10
Nov.	25	Clemson	L	10-34
Jan.	1	vs. Michigan %	W	26-19

#Charlotte %Outback Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Rick Sandidge, DT, Concord, NC
2. Josh Vann, WR, Tucker, GA
3. Dylan Wonnum, OT, Tucker, GA
4. Dakereon Joyner, QB, North Charleston, SC
5. Jaycee Horn, CB, Alpharetta, GA
6. Kingsley Enagbare, DE, Atlanta, GA
7. Jovaughn Gwyn, OG, Charlotte, NC
8. Rosendo Louis, ILB, Deerfield Beach, FL
9. Jonathan Gipson, CB, Hoschton, GA
10. Maxwell Iyama, OT, Murfreesboro, TN

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	24.2 ppg	12	99
Rushing	122.2 ypg	12	111
Passing	214.9 ypg	6	77
Total	337.1 ypg	12	109
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	20.7 ppg	5	25
Rushing	141.1 ypg	6	39
Passing	226.0 ypg	10	69
Total	367.1 ypg	7	44
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
+11	+0.85	2	13

STAT CORNER

5

In two years under Will Muschamp, the Gamecocks have won five games while getting outgained in total yardage. A difficult feat.

OFFENSE The story for the offense is another new coordinator for South Carolina head coach Will Muschamp. Bryan McClendon becomes Muschamp's fourth offensive coordinator in his seven seasons as a head coach. For the last two years, McClendon, a former Georgia receiver, has served as the Gamecocks wide receivers coach. He was promoted after Kurt Roper was fired following the regular season. The Gamecocks finished 12th and 14th in scoring under Roper, extending a trend of Muschamp teams struggling to put points on the board.

McClendon's solution, fully endorsed by his boss, is a more up-tempo system. "It's really simple: The more plays you run the more opportunities you get for yards and points," McClendon says. "You just get more at-bats — that's the biggest thing. We're going to try to keep snapping the ball and keep getting points, that's the plan. We want to be balanced and stay aggressive and be in attack mode as much as possible."

The Gamecocks averaged 24.2 points and 337.1 yards per game year ago, both of which ranked 12th in the SEC. The good news is they have almost all their offensive production back from 2017. It starts with quarterback Jake Bentley, who has started the last 20 games and thrown for 4,214 yards in that span. Bentley will benefit greatly from the return of wide receiver Deebo Samuel, who tied for the team lead in touchdowns last year (six) despite playing only three games. He missed the final 10 games due to injury.

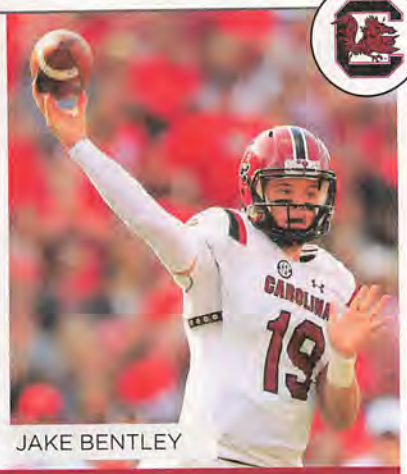
DEFENSE Third-year coordinator Travaris Robinson, who soon could be in line to land a head coaching position, has to replace a bunch of production up the middle. Defensive tackle Javon Kinlaw and middle linebacker T.J. Brunson have first-team All-SEC ability, but South Carolina needs more bodies at both of those positions. Safety is also a work in progress. Rice grad transfer J.T. Ibe and freshman Jaylin Dickerson are two newcomers who could help right away.

Seniors Rashad Fenton and Keisean Nixon — whose youth football coach was Snoop Dogg — both have plenty to prove at cornerback. Sophomore Jamyest Williams, a key recruit in the 2017 signing class, missed spring practice after shoulder surgery and could either be the nickel back or move to safety.

SPECIALISTS Sophomore kicker Parker White was 14-of-25 last year, including 4-of-14 from 40 yards and beyond, so it's no surprise that the job is up for grabs. Sophomore Alex Woznick, who started 2017 as the starter, and Kent State graduate transfer Shane Hynes will push White this fall. Punter Joseph Charlton is a known commodity who had a good year in 2017. The kickoff return game will get an instant upgrade with the return of Samuel, who might be the best in the nation at that spot.

FINAL ANALYSIS If a Muschamp-coached team is ever going to get the offense going, this would seem the year with Bentley and Samuel in the fold. The defense has personnel question marks, but Muschamp and Robinson have earned the benefit of the doubt on that side of the ball.

With Florida and Tennessee in transition thanks to coaching changes, South Carolina can realistically enter the season with its eye on second place in the SEC East, the same spot it claimed a year ago. It's probably a bit much to expect the Gamecocks to compete with defending conference champion Georgia, but South Carolina gets the Bulldogs in the second game of the season at home, so there's always hope.



JAKE BENTLEY

"This league has some good young quarterbacks, and Jake Bentley is one of the best. He's a tough dude who makes all of the right plays."

— An opposing SEC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)				
WR	1	**Deebo Samuel (Sr.)**	13	**Shi Smith (So.)**
WR	89	**Bryan Edwards (Jr.)**	18	**OrTre Smith (So.)**
WR	8	Randrecous Davis (So.)	83	Chavis Dawkins (Jr.)
LT	74	**Dennis Daley (Sr.)**	51	Maxwell Iyama (Fr.)
LG	50	Sadarius Hutcherson (So.)	70	Hank Manos (Fr.)
C	72	**Donell Stanley (Jr.)**	60	Chandler Farrell (So.)
RG	78	**Zack Bailey (Sr.)**	76	Jordan Rhodes (Fr.)
RT	63	Blake Camper (Sr.)	71	Eric Douglas (Fr.)
TE	40	Jacob August (Sr.)	3	K.C. Crosby (Sr.)
QB	19	**Jake Bentley (Jr.)**	12	Michael Scarnecchia (Sr.)
RB	5	Rico Dowdle (Jr.)	27	Ty'Son Williams (Jr.)
DEFENSE (5)				
DE	8	**D.J. Wonnum (Jr.)**	15	Aaron Sterling (So.)
DT	99	**Javon Kinlaw (Jr.)**	52	Kingsley Enagbare (Fr.)
DT	95	Kobe Smith (Jr.)	96	Aaron Thompson (So.)
DE	5	**Keir Thomas (Jr.)**	91	Shameik Blackshear (Jr.)
SLB	4	Bryson Allen-Williams (Sr.)	54	Davonne Bowen (Fr.)
MLB	6	**T.J. Brunson (Jr.)**	42	Rosendo Louis (Fr.)
WLB	44	Sherrod Greene (So.)	11	Eldridge Thompson (Sr.)
CB	9	Keisean Nixon (Sr.)	21	Jamyest Williams (So.)
CB	16	**Rashad Fenton (Sr.)**	28	Tavyn Jackson (Fr.)
S	22	Steven Montac (Sr.)	31	Kenneth Coleman (Jr.)
S	17	Javon Charleston (Jr.)	26	Jaylin Dickerson (Fr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K		Shane Hynes (Sr.)	**KR**	1 Deebo Samuel (Sr.)
P	20	Joseph Charlton (Jr.)	**PR**	21 Jamyest Williams (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Jake Bentley, 394-245-2,794-12, 18 TDs
Rushing: A.J. Turner, 98 att., 531 yds., 3 TDs
Receiving: Bryan Edwards, 64 rec., 793 yds., 5 TDs
Tackles: T.J. Brunson, 88
Sacks: D.J. Wonnum, 6.0
Interceptions: Steven Montac, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Will Muschamp
Record at School: 15-11 (2 years)
Career Record: 43-32 (6 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Bryan McClendon
Defensive Coordinator: Travaris Robinson
Columbia, SC • Williams-Brice Stadium (80,250)

Paul Abell

Tennessee Volunteers

National Forecast: **56** • SEC East Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **5-7, 2-6 SEC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	vs. West Virginia #
Sept.	8	East Tennessee St.
Sept.	15	UTEP
Sept.	22	Florida
Sept.	29	at Georgia
Oct.	13	at Auburn
Oct.	20	Alabama
Oct.	27	at South Carolina
Nov.	3	Charlotte
Nov.	10	Kentucky
Nov.	17	Missouri
Nov.	24	at Vanderbilt

#Charlotte

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 4-8, 0-8 SEC

Sept.	4	vs. Georgia Tech # (ot)	W	42-41
Sept.	9	Indiana State	W	42-7
Sept.	16	at Florida	L	20-26
Sept.	23	Massachusetts	W	17-13
Sept.	30	Georgia	L	0-41
Oct.	14	South Carolina	L	9-15
Oct.	21	at Alabama	L	7-45
Oct.	28	at Kentucky	L	26-29
Nov.	4	Southern Miss	W	24-10
Nov.	11	at Missouri	L	17-50
Nov.	18	LSU	L	10-30
Nov.	25	Vanderbilt	L	24-42

#Atlanta

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. JJ Peterson, OLB, Moultrie, GA
2. Alontae Taylor, WR, Manchester, TN
3. Greg Emerson, DT, Jackson, TN
4. Brant Lawless, DT, Nashville, TN
5. Dominick Wood-Anderson, TE, Spring Valley, CA*
6. Jordan Allen, LB, Fairfield, CA*
7. Emmit Gooden, DT, Brownsville, TN*
8. Jerome Carvin, OT, Cordova, TN
9. Jeremy Banks, RB, Cordova, TN
10. Jahmir Johnson, OT, Philadelphia, PA*

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	19.8 ppg	14	118
Rushing	117.4 ypg	13	113
Passing	173.7 ypg	13	109
Total	291.1 ypg	14	125
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	29.1 ppg	9	83
Rushing	251.3 ypg	14	126
Passing	161.7 ypg	1	3
Total	412.9 ypg	10	82
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
-3	-0.25	10	88

STAT CORNER

-1.4

Tennessee averaged just 3.9 points per trip inside the opponent's 40 and allowed 5.3. That minus-1.4 margin ranked 127th in FBS.

OFFENSE Jeremy Pruitt envisions a physical offense capable of pounding out rushing yards and creating explosive pass plays. Much will depend on the quarterback, however, where the Vols are unsettled entering fall drills. Graduate transfer Keller Chryst was 11–2 as a starter in Stanford's pro-style offense, and his experience would seem to put him at an advantage. Chryst and freshman JT Shrout will arrive in Knoxville over the summer. Sophomores Jarrett Guarantano and Will McBride battled through spring drills.

Whoever lines up under center will be playing behind an inexperienced line, particularly with the future of budding star Trey Smith in doubt. If Smith doesn't return, junior Drew Richmond will get yet another chance to live up to his five-star billing at left tackle after two unremarkable seasons.

Big-play threat Ty Chandler leads a crowded backfield. Grad transfer Madre London and incoming freshman Jeremy Banks are bigger backs. Sophomores Tim Jordan and Trey Coleman complete the stable.

The return of playmaker Jauan Jennings — he of the 2016 Hail Mary catch against Georgia — gives the receiving corps a boost. Jennings suffered a season-ending broken wrist in the 2017 opener. Brandon Johnson and Marquez Callaway are sleek targets who will complement Jennings on the perimeter. Dominick Wood-Anderson, the top-ranked junior college tight end, could create matchup problems.

DEFENSE Pruitt ranks among the finest defensive minds in the country, and the first puzzle he'll need to solve is repairing a Tennessee front seven that played a big role in the Vols' porous rush defense.

Seniors Shy Tuttle and Alexis Johnson — both around 300 pounds — figure to share snaps at nose tackle as the Vols transition a 3-4 defensive front. Tennessee will rely on seniors Kyle Phillips and Jonathan Kongbo outside.

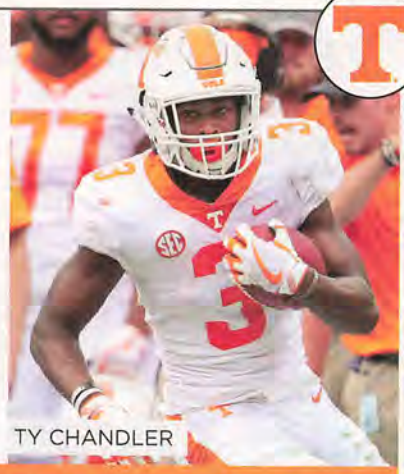
Darrell Taylor has transitioned from end to outside backer, ready to attack from new angles. Quart'e Sapp added 15 pounds, up to 226, and is expected to play alongside 2017 tackles leader Daniel Bituli at inside linebacker. Darrin Kirkland Jr., plagued by knee injuries throughout his career, also hopes to get in the mix.

The Vols return battle-tested safeties in Nigel Warrior and Micah Abernathy, with 2016 team tackles leader Todd Kelly Jr. returning from a knee injury and looking to get his starting spot back.

The defense's efficiency might ultimately be determined by the Vols' inexperienced cornerbacks, as Pruitt has pledged to play press coverage. Sophomores Shawn Shamburger and Maleik Gray and juniors Baylen Buchanan and Marquill Osborne will all be in the hunt for time.

SPECIALISTS Sophomore placekicker Brent Cimaglia connected on 8-of-13 field-goal attempts, including five of 40 yards or more. Michigan graduate transfer Ryan Tice is a walk-on with two years of eligibility who hopes to challenge Cimaglia. Freshman Paxton Brooks was rated the No. 2 punter in the nation by Kohl's Professional Football Camps.

FINAL ANALYSIS Tennessee doesn't have much margin for error, particularly with a challenging schedule that opens with offensive juggernaut West Virginia. The Vols plan to be efficient with a low-risk offense, mindful of turnovers while featuring aggressive blitz packages and coverage schemes. Pruitt hopes that recipe is good enough to produce (at least) six wins in Year 1.



TY CHANDLER

"They have done a poor job stopping the run in the past few years. I don't think they are very big or strong in their front seven."

— An opposing SEC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (4)

WR	15	Jauan Jennings (Jr.)	5	Josh Palmer (So.)	
WR	1	**Marquez Callaway (Jr.)**	8	Latrell Williams (So.)	
WR	7	**Brandon Johnson (Jr.)**	10	Tyler Byrd (Jr.)	
LT	73	**Trey Smith (So.)**	51	**Drew Richmond (Jr.)**	
LG	77	Devante Brooks (So.)	74	K'Rojhn Calbert (So.)	
C	70	Ryan Johnson (So.)	78	Ollie Lane (Fr.)	
RG	56	Riley Locklear (So.)	75	Jerome Carvin (Fr.)	
RT	68	Marcus Tatum (Jr.)		Jahmir Johnson (So.)	
TE		Dominick Wood-Anderson	81	Austin Pope (So.)	
QB		Keller Chryst (Sr.)	2	Jarrett Guarantano (So.)	
RB	3	Ty Chandler (So.)	9	Tim Jordan (So.)	

DEFENSE (6)

DE	5	Kyle Phillips (Sr.)	56	Matthew Butler (So.)
DT	2	Shy Tuttle (Sr.)	99	Eric Crosby (Fr.)
DE	1	**Jonathan Kongbo (Sr.)**	98	Alexis Johnson (Sr.)
OLB	19	**Darrell Taylor (Jr.)**	13	Deandre Johnson (So.)
ILB	14	**Quart'e Sapp (Jr.)**	34	Darrin Kirkland Jr. (Sr.)
ILB	35	**Daniel Bituli (Jr.)**	23	Will Ignont (So.)
OLB	11	Austin Smith (Jr.)	8	Jordan Allen (So.)
CB	15	Shawn Shamburger (So.)	27	Carlin Fils-aime (Jr.)
CB	28	Baylen Buchanan (Jr.)	3	Marquill Osborne (Jr.)
SS	18	**Nigel Warrior (Jr.)**	26	Theo Jackson (So.)
FS	22	**Micah Abernathy (Sr.)**	24	Todd Kelly Jr. (Sr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	30	Brent Cimaglia (So.)	KR	3	Ty Chandler (So.)
P	37	Paxton Brooks (Fr.)	PR	1	Marquez Callaway (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Jarrett Guarantano, 139-86-997-2, 4 TDs
Rushing: Ty Chandler, 71 att., 305 yds., 2 TDs
Receiving: Brandon Johnson, 37 rec., 482 yds., 1 TDs
Tackles: Daniel Bituli, 90
Sacks: Darrell Taylor, 3.0
Interceptions: Daniel Bituli, 1; Nigel Warrior, 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Jeremy Pruitt
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: First Season
Offensive Coordinator: Tyson Helton
Defensive Coordinators: Chris Rumph, Kevin Sherrer
Knoxville, TN • Neyland Stadium (102,455)

Tom DiPace

Vanderbilt Commodores

National Forecast: **70** • SEC East Prediction: **7** • Projected Record: **4-8, 1-7 SEC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Middle Tennessee
Sept.	8	Nevada
Sept.	15	at Notre Dame
Sept.	22	South Carolina
Sept.	29	Tennessee State
Oct.	6	at Georgia
Oct.	13	Florida
Oct.	20	at Kentucky
Oct.	27	at Arkansas
Nov.	10	at Missouri
Nov.	17	Ole Miss
Nov.	24	Tennessee

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 1-7 SEC

Sept.	2	at Middle Tennessee	W	28-6
Sept.	9	Alabama A&M	W	42-0
Sept.	16	Kansas State	W	14-7
Sept.	23	Alabama	L	0-59
Sept.	30	at Florida	L	24-38
Oct.	7	Georgia	L	14-45
Oct.	14	at Ole Miss	L	35-57
Oct.	28	at South Carolina	L	27-34
Nov.	4	Western Kentucky	W	31-17
Nov.	11	Kentucky	L	21-44
Nov.	18	Missouri	L	17-45
Nov.	25	at Tennessee	W	42-24

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Alston Orji, ILB, Rockwall, TX
2. Cam Johnson, WR, Brentwood, TN
3. Brendon Harris, S, Chattanooga, TN
4. Salua Masina, OLB, Salt Lake City, UT
5. Tre' Douglas, CB, McDonough, GA
6. Allan Walters, QB, Chatham, NJ
7. Dan Dawkins, C, Staten Island, NY
8. Gavin Schoenwald, TE, Brentwood, TN
9. Dashaun Jerkins, S, Woodbridge, VA
10. C.J. Bolar, WR, Purvis, MS

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	24.6 ppg	11	95
Rushing	107.2 ypg	14	121
Passing	243.6 ypg	4	53
Total	350.8 ypg	10	102
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	31.3 ppg	11	88
Rushing	198.5 ypg	12	101
Passing	194.6 ypg	7	26
Total	393.1 ypg	8	65
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
-5	-0.42	12	97

STAT CORNER

4.8

Vanderbilt went from allowing 3.5 points per trip inside their 40 (sixth in FBS) to 4.8 in 2017 (99th), FBS' second-largest regression.

OFFENSE Vanderbilt's passing attack was greatly improved in 2017 thanks in large part to the emergence of Kyle Shurmur in his second full season as the starter. The Commodores ranked fourth in the league with 243.6 passing yards per game — their highest total since Jay Cutler's senior season in 2005 — and mercifully ended a four-year streak in which they threw more interceptions than TD passes.

Vanderbilt's struggles in the running game were one of the more surprising developments last fall. Despite the return of tailback Ralph Webb — the school's all-time leading rusher after three seasons — and three starters on the offensive line, Vanderbilt ranked last in the SEC with 107.2 yards per game (down from 164.2 in 2016). Ke'Shawn Vaughn, a Nashville native who transferred to Vanderbilt after two years at Illinois, is the frontrunner to replace Webb as the No. 1 back. Vaughn rushed for 723 yards as a true freshman in 2015 before falling out of favor with the new staff in Champaign.

C.J. Duncan and Trent Sherfield became only the second pair of wide receivers in school history to each catch at least 50 passes in a season. Both have graduated, leaving junior Kalija Lipscomb as the clear-cut No. 1 target. Tight end Jared Pinkney has been considered one of the most talented players since he arrived on campus, but he's caught only 44 passes in two seasons.

All five starters and all but one reserve return on an offensive line that did a solid job in pass protection but struggled in the run game.

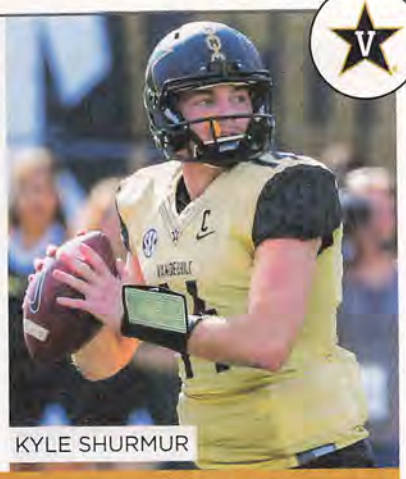
DEFENSE Three games into the 2017 season, Vanderbilt led the nation in both total defense (198.3 ypg) and scoring defense (4.3 ppg) en route to a 3–0 start. The team's defensive fortunes, however, took a dramatic turn for the worse as SEC play commenced. They allowed 59 points in a shutout loss to Alabama in Week 4 and proceeded to set an SEC record by allowing 346 points (43.3 per game) in the eight-game schedule.

Derek Mason responded to the struggles by hiring Jason Tarver, a former colleague at Stanford, as the team's defensive coordinator. Tarver, who spent the last six years in the NFL, inherits a defense that returns four starters and has significant issues on every level.

There's cautious optimism that things will be better on the defensive line. Despite the loss of Nifae Lealao, the unit's only 300-pounder, Vanderbilt should have more size along the front. The linebacking corps will be led by Charles Wright, who emerged as the Dores' best pass rusher (9.0 sacks) in his first season as a starter. Cornerback Joejuan Williams, one of the top recruits in school history, is the best player on the defense.

SPECIALISTS The special teams will have an almost entirely new look in 2018: New coach (Shawn Mennenga), new kicker (freshman Javan Rice or walk-on Ryley Guay), and new punter (grad transfer Parker Thome).

FINAL ANALYSIS The overall win total dropped by only one game from 2016 to 2017, but a deeper dive into the numbers reveals that the Commodores took a significant step back in Mason's fourth season. To get his team back into the bowl picture — and to stay off the hot seat — Mason will need to solve the Commodores' defensive issues. Even if Shurmur and the offense continue to progress — a realistic proposition with an improved offensive line and the addition of Vaughn in the backfield — Vanderbilt will struggle to stay out of the SEC East cellar if the defense is allowing 40-plus points in league games.



KYLE SHURMUR

"For them to make the steps they want to make on offense, Kyle Shurmur will have to take the next step and be a more consistent performer this year."

— An opposing SEC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	16	Kalija Lipscomb (Jr.)	85	Chris Pierce (So.)
WR	15	Alex Stump (Jr.)		Cam Johnson (Fr.)
WR	4	Donaven Tennyson (Jr.)	36	Trey Ellis (Sr.)
LT	**58**	**Justin Skule (Sr.)**	73	Johnathan Stewart (Fr.)
LG	74	Cole Clemens (So.)	**56**	**Saige Young (Jr.)**
C	**76**	**Egidio DellaRipa (Sr.)**	53	Sean McMoore (So.)
RG	**61**	**Bruno Reagan (Sr.)**	56	Saige Young (Jr.)
RT	**77**	**Devin Cochran (So.)**	78	Bryce Bailey (Fr.)
TE	**80**	**Jared Pinkney (Jr.)**	84	Sam Dobbs (Sr.)
QB	**14**	**Kyle Shurmur (Sr.)**	2	Deuce Wallace (So.)
RB	5	Ke'Shawn Vaughn (Jr.)	23	Khari Blasingame (Sr.)

DEFENSE (4)

DE	**34**	**Dare Odeyingbo (Sr.)**	91	Drew Birchmeier (So.)
DT	90	Cameron Tidd (So.)	94	Rutger Reitmaier (Fr.)
DE	10	Dayo Odeyingbo (So.)		Louis Vecchio (Sr.)
OLB	**11**	**Charles Wright (Sr.)**	48	Andre Mintze (So.)
ILB	26	Andrew Rector (Sr.)	7	Dimitri Moore (Fr.)
ILB	40	Jordan Griffin (Sr.)		Alston Orji (Fr.)
OLB	25	Josh Smith (Sr.)	9	Caleb Peart (Jr.)
CB	**8**	**Joejuan Williams (Jr.)**	12	Tae Daley (So.)
CB	21	Donovan Sheffield (Sr.)		Alim Muhammad (Sr.)
S	**5**	**LaDarius Wiley (Sr.)**	35	Frank Coppet (So.)
S	6	Zaire Jones (So.)		Brendon Harris (Fr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	Javan Rice (Fr.)	**KR**	32 Jamauri Wakefield (So.)
P	Parker Thome (Sr.)	**PR**	16 Kalija Lipscomb (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Kyle Shurmur, 380-220-2,823-10, 26 TDs
Rushing: Khari Blasingame, 45 att., 147 yds., 0 TDs
Receiving: Kalija Lipscomb, 37 rec., 610 yds., 8 TDs
Tackles: LaDarius Wiley, 88
Sacks: Charles Wright, 9.0
Interceptions: Three players tied with 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Derek Mason
Record at School: 18-31 (4 years)
Career Record: 18-31 (4 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Andy Ludwig
Defensive Coordinator: Jason Tarver
Nashville, TN • Vanderbilt Stadium (40,550)

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

Alabama **Crimson Tide**

National Forecast: **1** • SEC West Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **13-0, 8-0 SEC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	vs. Louisville #
Sept.	8	Arkansas State
Sept.	15	at Ole Miss
Sept.	22	Texas A&M
Sept.	29	UL Lafayette
Oct.	6	at Arkansas
Oct.	13	Missouri
Oct.	20	at Tennessee
Nov.	3	at LSU
Nov.	10	Mississippi State
Nov.	17	The Citadel
Nov.	24	Auburn

#Orlando, FL

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 13-1, 7-1 SEC

Sept.	2	vs. Florida State #	W	24-7
Sept.	9	Fresno State	W	41-10
Sept.	16	Colorado State	W	41-23
Sept.	23	at Vanderbilt	W	59-0
Sept.	30	Ole Miss	W	66-3
Oct.	7	at Texas A&M	W	27-19
Oct.	14	Arkansas	W	41-9
Oct.	21	Tennessee	W	45-7
Nov.	4	LSU	W	24-10
Nov.	11	at Mississippi State	W	31-24
Nov.	18	Mercer	W	56-0
Nov.	25	at Auburn	L	14-26
Jan.	1	vs. Clemson %	W	24-6
Jan.	8	vs. Georgia & (ot)	W	26-23

#Atlanta %Sugar Bowl: CFB Playoff Semifinal &CFB Playoff Championship

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Eyabi Anoma, OLB, Baltimore, MD
2. Patrick Surtain Jr., CB, Plantation, FL
3. Jaylen Waddle, WR, Bellaire, TX
4. Stephon Wynn Jr., DE, Anderson, FL
5. Jalyn Armour-Davis, CB, Mobile, AL
6. Jordan Davis, OLB, Memphis, TN
7. Josh Jobe, CB, Miami, FL
8. Emil Ekiyor Jr., C, Indianapolis, IN
9. Cameron Latu, DE, Salt Lake City, UT
10. Tommy Brown, OG, Santa Ana, CA

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	37.1 ppg	2	15
Rushing	250.6 ypg	3	13
Passing	193.4 ypg	9	91
Total	444.1 ypg	4	29
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	11.9 ppg	1	1
Rushing	94.7 ypg	1	1
Passing	165.7 ypg	2	6
Total	260.4 ypg	1	1
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
+14	+1.00	1	5

STAT CORNER

+3.3

Alabama averaged 7.4 yards per play on first downs and allowed just 4.1. This plus-3.3 per-play margin was the best in FBS.

OFFENSE It's easy to overlook the rest of the Alabama offense in light of the current quarterback competition between two players who've already proven themselves. Jalen Hurts vs. Tua Tagovailoa is the battle that overshadows the rest of the offense this offseason.

This side of the ball worries Nick Saban much less than the defense given that many key components of the title-winning 2017 offense return. Four of the five offensive linemen and each of the tight ends are back for 2018. Damien Harris is going for a rare third straight 1,000-yard season as the top returning rusher. Only Bo Scarbrough departed from a loaded backfield that welcomes back Josh Jacobs, Najee Harris and Brian Robinson.

Calvin Ridley's 63 catches represented 30.9 percent of the 2017 team total; the next-best wideout had 14. That leaves a lot of production to fill with Jerry Jeudy the next in line to follow fellow South Florida products Amari Cooper and Ridley. Jeudy's 14 catches and 264 yards offered a glimpse into his explosiveness. It's also hard to forget DeVonta Smith after his game-winning catch against Georgia in the title game. Tight ends Irv Smith Jr. and Hale Hentges also figure to be a bigger part of the passing game this fall.

DEFENSE There are major holes to fill on all three levels. The secondary presents the biggest challenge, as both cornerbacks and the top two safeties are gone. Deionte Thompson, starter in the CFB Playoff games because of Hootie Jones' injury, is the most experienced defensive back on the roster. Two new cornerbacks — Saivion Smith, a former LSU Tiger, and five-star freshman Patrick Surtain Jr. — will play right away.

It always starts up front with this defense, and Alabama welcomes back a few key pieces on the defensive line. Raekwon Davis and Isaiah Buggs became starters last season at end. They will be crucial given the early exit of nose tackle Da'Ron Payne, who set the tone and blew up the middle of offensive lines, most noticeably in the postseason. In the spring, Alabama tried a few options in the middle, including Johnny Dwight, Phidarian Mathis and Quinnen Williams, while signing another junior college nose tackle in Tevita Musika.

Outside linebackers should be the strength of the defense with Terrell Lewis, Christian Miller and Anfernee Jennings healthy after an injury-marred 2017. The issue is depth in the middle. There's little experience behind starters Mack Wilson and Dylan Moses — both of whom missed games with injuries last year.

SPECIALISTS Alabama must replace placekicker Andy Pappanastos and Ray Guy finalist punter JK Scott. Kicker Joseph Bulovas redshirted last year and worked on his consistency. Freshman Skyler DeLong was one of the top punters in the nation as a high school senior last year.

FINAL ANALYSIS There was a different feel to Alabama's most recent national title. For one thing, the Tide had to overcome a bewildering rash of injuries and a November loss to Auburn. There also were the emotional swings of the title game, topped off by the iconic second-and-26 walk-off winner. The end result was the same, though — a fifth national title in the past nine seasons — and the expectations remain, thanks to many of the players who were involved in the crucial moments of that wild night in Atlanta. Alabama will begin the season ranked No. 1 in the nation. And there's a good chance the Tide will end the season in that spot as well.



TUA TAGOVAILOA

"The one thing that is more impressive than any with that program is the way they just reload with not only players, but assistant coaches."

— An opposing SEC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	4	Jerry Jeudy (So.)	6	DeVonta Smith (So.)	
WR	11	Henry Ruggs III (So.)	14	Tyrell Shavers (Fr.)	
LT	73	**Jonah Williams (Jr.)**	70	Alex Leatherwood (So.)	
LG	66	**Lester Cotton (Sr.)**	59	Dallas Warmack (Jr.)	
C	71	**Ross Pierschbacher (Sr.)**	56	Brandon Kennedy (So.)	
RG	74	Jedrick Wills (So.)	72	Richie Petitbon (Jr.)	
RT	77	**Matt Womack (Jr.)**	74	Jedrick Wills (So.)	
TE	82	Irv Smith (Jr.)	87	Miller Forristall (So.)	
HB	84	**Hale Hentges (Sr.)**	44	Kedrick James (So.)	
QB	13	Tua Tagovailoa (So.)	2	**Jalen Hurts (Jr.)**	
RB	34	**Damien Harris (Sr.)**	22	Najee Harris (So.)	

DEFENSE (3)

DE	49	**Isaiah Buggs (Sr.)**	92	Quinnen Williams (So.)	
NT	92	Quinnen Williams (So.))	48	Phidarian Mathis (Fr.)	
DE	99	**Raekwon Davis (Jr.)**	89	LaBryan Ray (So.)	
OLB	24	Terrell Lewis (Jr.)	33	**Anfernee Jennings (Jr.)**	
ILB	30	Mack Wilson (Jr.)	36	Markail Benton (Fr.)	
ILB	32	Dylan Moses (So.)	40	Joshua McMillon (Jr.)	
OLB	47	Christian Miller (Sr.)	4	Christopher Allen (So.)	
CB	7	Trevon Diggs (Jr.)		Patrick Surtain (Fr.)	
CB	8	Saivion Smith (Jr.)	26	Kyriq McDonald (Fr.)	
SS	14	Deionte Thompson (Jr.)	21	Jared Mayden (Jr.)	
FS	3	Daniel Wright (So.)	15	Xavier McKinney (So.)	

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	97	Joseph Bulovas (Fr.)	KR	8	Josh Jacobs (Jr.)
P	10	Skyler DeLong (Fr.)	PR	7	Trevon Diggs (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Jalen Hurts, 254-154-2,081-1, 17 TDs
Rushing: Damien Harris, 135 att., 1,000 yds., 11 TDs
Receiving: Jerry Jeudy, 14 rec., 264 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Raekwon Davis, 69
Sacks: Raekwon Davis, 8.5
Interceptions: Mack Wilson, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Nick Saban
Record at School: 132-20 (11 years)
Career Record: 223-62-1 (22 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Josh Gattis, Mike Locksley
Defensive Coordinators: Pete Golding, Tosh Lupoi
Tuscaloosa, AL • Bryant-Denny Stadium (101,821)

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

Arkansas Razorbacks

National Forecast: **59** • SEC West Prediction: **7** • Projected Record: **5-7, 1-7 SEC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Eastern Illinois
Sept.	8	at Colorado State
Sept.	15	North Texas
Sept.	22	at Auburn
Sept.	29	vs. Texas A&M #
Oct.	6	Alabama
Oct.	13	vs. Ole Miss %
Oct.	20	Tulsa
Oct.	27	Vanderbilt
Nov.	10	LSU
Nov.	17	at Mississippi State
Nov.	24	at Missouri

#Arlington, TX %Little Rock, AR

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 4-8, 1-7 SEC

Aug.	31	vs. Florida A&M #	W	49-7
Sept.	9	TCU	L	7-28
Sept.	23	vs. Texas A&M % (ot)	L	43-50
Sept.	30	New Mexico State	W	42-24
Oct.	7	at South Carolina	L	22-48
Oct.	14	at Alabama	L	9-41
Oct.	21	Auburn	L	20-52
Oct.	28	at Ole Miss	W	38-37
Nov.	4	Coastal Carolina	W	39-38
Nov.	11	at LSU	L	10-33
Nov.	18	Mississippi State	L	21-28
Nov.	24	Missouri	L	45-48

#Little Rock %Arlington

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Bumper Pool, ILB, Lucas, TX
2. Connor Noland, QB, Greenwood, AR
3. Myles Mason, S, Trussville, AL
4. Dorian Gerald, DE, Florence, SC*
5. Billy Ferrell, DT, Fordyce, AR
6. Michael Woods, WR, Magnolia, TX
7. Ladarrius Bishop, CB, Ashdown, AR
8. Joseph Foucha, S, New Orleans, LA
9. Courtré Alexander, DE, Owasso, OK
10. Nick Fulwider, DE, Tyrone, GA

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	28.8 ppg	8	61
Rushing	168.0 ypg	7	61
Passing	205.4 ypg	7	83
Total	373.4 ypg	9	94
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	36.2 ppg	14	115
Rushing	196.1 ypg	11	98
Passing	242.2 ypg	12	93
Total	438.3 ypg	13	102
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
-1	-0.08	9	72

STAT CORNER

13.1

Arkansas stuffed opponents at or behind the line on only 13.1% of rushes, second worst in FBS and ahead of only Nebraska.

OFFENSE Chad Morris has installed a power spread up-tempo offense, a stark contrast to the Razorbacks' previous ball-control pro-style attack that was run by the previous staff. A ton of skill position talent and linemen return, but they'll be directed by a quarterback other than an Allen brother for the first time in five years. Junior Ty Storey and sophomore Cole Kelley, who started four games late last season, will battle for the job. Morris says he won't name a starter until the fall.

Guard Hjalte Froholdt is the veteran leader of an offensive line that brings back tackles Colton Jackson and Brian Wallace but has struggled much of the last two seasons. Johnny Gibson and Jalen Merrick are battling at right guard, and Dylan Hays and Ty Clary are the top contenders at center.

The backfield has a combination of power backs such as Devwah Whaley and Maleek Williams and speedsters T.J. Hammonds and Chase Hayden. Hammonds averaged 8.2 yards per carry in limited duty last year. Transfer Rakeem Boyd, a former Texas A&M signee, will join the crew this summer.

Receiver Jared Cornelius is back for his senior year following Achilles tendon surgery, joining leading receiver Jonathan Nance, whose emergence last year was a bit of a surprise over more celebrated junior college teammate Brandon Martin. Nance led the team in receptions (37), yards (539) and TD catches (five).

DEFENSE Veteran coordinator John Chavis, now at his fourth SEC stop, expects to get better pressure on the quarterback in a return to a 4-3 front that will be built around pass rushers such as Randy Ramsey, Gabe Richardson and the versatile McTelvin Agim. The Hogs were last in the SEC a year ago in both sacks (19.0) and tackles for a loss (48.0).

The return to a 4-3 scheme should help middle linebacker De'Jon Harris, who had 115 tackles last season but had to contend with more interference from offensive linemen. Dre Greenlaw is back at the weak-side linebacker spot at which he had a solid freshman debut in 2015.

The secondary returns plenty of experience, but things might look quite different in 2018. Two starters from last fall are at new spots — Santos Ramirez has moved from strong to free safety and cornerback Kamren Curl is now at strong safety. Ryan Pulley, who missed all but one game with a torn pectoral muscle, is back in the lineup.

SPECIALISTS Connor Limpert had a strong season after winning the placekicker job in Week 3. The left footer went 8-of-9 on field goals, including a game-winning 34-yard boot at Ole Miss. The Razorbacks need to be better at punter after first-year starter Blake Johnson averaged 38.6 yards per kick. The Razorbacks should be more dangerous on special teams with De'Vion Warren on kickoffs and Cornelius likely handling punt returns again.

FINAL ANALYSIS It would be unreasonable to believe the Razorbacks could go from 1–7 in conference play to a contender in the SEC West in the course of one offseason. Quarterback play will likely go a long way in determining whether the offense builds up steam in Morris' debut. And the defense — which gave up a staggering 7.1 yards per play in SEC games — needs major help at all three levels. The debut of Morris should provide some splash and dash, but the Razorbacks need a further injection of speed and depth across the board to make a significant move in the brutal SEC West.



DE'JON HARRIS

"One thing Chad (Morris) will benefit from is the way Bret (Bielema) ran a clean program. There won't be character problems in that locker room."

— An opposing SEC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	7	Jonathan Nance (Sr.)	8	Michael Woods (Fr.)	
WR	16	La'Michael Pettway (Jr.)	10	Jordan Jones (So.)	
WR	9	De'Vion Warren (So.)	13	Deon Stewart (Jr.)	
LT	74	**Colton Jackson (Jr.)**	57	Shane Clenin (Fr.)	
LG	51	**Hjalte Froholdt (Sr.)**	68	Kirby Adcock (Fr.)	
C	69	Dylan Hays (So.)	66	Ty Clary (So.)	
RG	62	**Johnny Gibson (Sr.)**	79	Jalen Merrick (Jr.)	
RT	60	**Brian Wallace (Sr.)**	78	Dalton Wagner (Fr.)	
TE	18	Jeremy Patton (Sr.)	44	**Austin Cantrell (Jr.)**	
QB	15	Cole Kelley (So.)	4	Ty Storey (Jr.)	
RB	21	**Devwah Whaley (Jr.)**	2	Chase Hayden (So.)	

DEFENSE (7)

DE	10	**Randy Ramsey (Sr.)**	91	Michael Taylor (Sr.)
NG	3	**McTelvin Agim (Jr.)**	41	Austin Capps (Jr.)
DT	52	**T.J. Smith (Jr.)**	7	Briston Guidry (So.)
DE	6	Gabe Richardson (Jr.)	86	Jamario Bell (Jr.)
OLB	33	Dee Walker (So.)	31	Grant Morgan (So.)
MLB	8	**De'Jon Harris (Jr.)**	16	Bumper Pool (Fr.)
WLB	23	**Dre Greenlaw (Sr.)**	4	Alexy Jean-Baptiste (So.)
CB	11	Ryan Pulley (Sr.)	14	Britto Tutt (Jr.)
CB	1	Chevin Calloway (So.)	13	Nate Dalton (Sr.)
FS	9	**Santos Ramirez (Sr.)**	21	Montaric Brown (Fr.)
SS	2	**Kamren Curl (So.)**	25	Micahh Smith (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	19	Connor Limpert (Jr.)	KR	9	De'Vion Warren (So.)
P	18	Blake Johnson (Jr.)	PR	1	Jared Cornelius (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Cole Kelley, 151-87-1,038-4, 8 TDs
Rushing: Devwah Whaley, 127 att., 559 yds., 7 TDs
Receiving: Jonathan Nance, 37 rec., 539 yds., 5 TDs
Tackles: De'Jon Harris, 115
Sacks: De'Jon Harris, 3.5
Interceptions: Kevin Richardson II, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Chad Morris
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: 14-22 (3 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Joe Craddock
Defensive Coordinator: John Chavis
Fayetteville, AR • Reynolds Razorback Stadium (80,800)

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

Auburn Tigers

National Forecast: **7** • SEC West Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **10-2, 6-2 SEC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	vs. Washington #
Sept.	8	Alabama State
Sept.	15	LSU
Sept.	22	Arkansas
Sept.	29	Southern Miss
Oct.	6	at Mississippi State
Oct.	13	Tennessee
Oct.	20	at Ole Miss
Nov.	3	Texas A&M
Nov.	10	at Georgia
Nov.	17	Liberty
Nov.	24	at Alabama

#Atlanta

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 10-4, 7-1 SEC

Sept.	2	Georgia Southern	W	41-7
Sept.	9	at Clemson	L	6-14
Sept.	16	Mercer	W	24-10
Sept.	23	at Missouri	W	51-14
Sept.	30	Mississippi State	W	49-10
Oct.	7	Ole Miss	W	44-23
Oct.	14	at LSU	L	23-27
Oct.	21	at Arkansas	W	52-20
Nov.	4	at Texas A&M	W	42-27
Nov.	11	Georgia	W	40-17
Nov.	18	UL Monroe	W	42-14
Nov.	25	Alabama	W	26-14
Dec.	2	vs. Georgia #	L	7-28
Jan.	1	vs. UCF %	L	27-34

#Atlanta %Peach Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Joey Gatewood, QB, Jacksonville, FL
2. Matthew Hill, WR, Snellville, GA
3. Coynis Miller Jr., DT, Birmingham, AL
4. Harold Joiner, RB, Birmingham, AL
5. Smoke Monday, DB, Atlanta, GA
6. Anthony Schwartz, WR, Fort Lauderdale, FL
7. Seth Williams, WR, Cottondale, AL
8. Zakoby McClain, OLB, Valdosta, GA
9. Asa Martin, RB, Decatur, AL
10. Jamien Sherwood, S, Jensen Beach, FL

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	33.9 ppg	4	25
Rushing	218.3 ypg	4	26
Passing	233.4 ypg	5	65
Total	451.6 ypg	3	26
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	18.5 ppg	3	11
Rushing	137.0 ypg	5	35
Passing	182.4 ypg	5	18
Total	319.4 ypg	5	14
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
-1	-0.07	7	71

STAT CORNER

.571

In five seasons, Gus Malzahn is 29-10 before November (a .744 win pct.) but just 16-12 in November and beyond (.571).

OFFENSE The equation is simple for Auburn's offense under Gus Malzahn: If the veteran coach has a quarterback he trusts to make plays — with his arm or his legs — then you can expect the Tigers to challenge for an SEC title.

Jarrett Stidham would be described as the former — a traditional passer rather than a dynamic athlete like Nick Marshall or Cam Newton. Stidham gave Auburn a viable vertical passing game, leading the conference and ranking sixth nationally in completion percentage and finishing second in the SEC in passing yardage with 3,158.

In 2018, the question won't be about the QB but about his protection. During five of its last six games in 2017, Auburn started four seniors on its offensive line, and those players have given way to a lot of new faces. Line coach J.B. Grimes has figured out at least three of the five starting spots: left tackle, left guard and right guard.

Only two schools have had a 1,000-yard rusher in each of the last nine seasons: Auburn and Boise State. The Tigers expect that streak to continue with Kam Martin, who averaged 6.1 yards per carry in limited action during the 2017 season.

Auburn lost two wide receivers in spring drills to significant knee injuries (Will Hastings and Eli Stove), but the Tigers return nearly every player from last season, including Ryan Davis, who broke the school's single-season record with 84 receptions.

DEFENSE Auburn will likely challenge Clemson for the nation's most dominant defensive front thanks to the return of starters Derrick Brown, Dontavius Russell and Marlon Davidson — all of whom are expected to be NFL Draft picks when their college careers are over. Pass rusher extraordinaire Jeff Holland will be missed, but the Tigers still have more than enough firepower to get after the quarterback.

The biggest concern at linebacker is finding enough snaps to keep everybody content. The team's top two returning tacklers are backers Deshaun Davis (82) and Darrell Williams (57). Williams is probably the team's best coverage linebacker.

The secondary is the one area that has the staff concerned — not because of poor play, but due to a lack of experienced depth. Auburn will rely on the veteran leadership of Javaris Davis and Jamel Dean at cornerback. Some true freshmen likely will be forced into action when the Tigers go to nickel and dime packages.

SPECIALISTS For the first time in five years, Auburn will be without placekicker Daniel Carlson, the program's all-time scoring leader. So now they simply turn to his younger brother. Anders Carlson was one of the nation's top kicking prospects two years ago and gives Auburn a similar level of confidence. A former Australian Rules Football player is expected to take over punting duties as 25-year-old Arryn Siposs arrives in the summer. Auburn hasn't had a punt or kick return for a TD in the last three years.

FINAL ANALYSIS Malzahn faces some lofty expectations. The Tigers' sixth-year head coach just signed a seven-year contract extension for $49 million, with $36.75 million guaranteed, after a 10–4 season in which he won the SEC West and defeated both National Championship Game participants (Alabama and Georgia). Now, though, many fans will define an Auburn season as a success or failure based on whether it defeats those two rivals, and the Tigers must do so on the road in 2018. Good luck, Gus.



JARRETT STIDHAM

"The defensive line has been the biggest growth area under Gus (Malzahn). They're as good as anyone in our league on the two-deep."

— An opposing SEC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)					
WR	**23**	**Ryan Davis (Sr.)**	11	Shedrick Jackson (Fr.)	
WR	**81**	**Darius Slayton (Jr.)**	**3**	**Nate Craig-Myers (Jr.)**	
LT	**76**	**Prince Tega Wanogho (Jr.)**	66	Bailey Sharp (Jr.)	
LG	77	Marquel Harrell (Jr.)	59	Brodarious Hamm (Fr.)	
C	54	Kaleb Kim (Jr.)	52	Nick Brahms (Fr.)	
RG	**64**	**Mike Horton (Jr.)**	56	Tashawn Manning (Fr.)	
RT	68	Austin Troxell (Fr.)	70	Calvin Ashley (Fr.)	
TE	85	Jalen Harris (Sr.)	80	Sal Cannella (Jr.)	
HB	**27**	**Chandler Cox (Sr.)**	99	Spencer Nigh (Jr.)	
QB	**8**	**Jarrett Stidham (Jr.)**	14	Malik Willis (So.)	
RB	9	Kam Martin (Jr.)	28	JaTarvious Whitlow (Fr.)	
DEFENSE (6)					
DE	**3**	**Marlon Davidson (Jr.)**	91	Nick Coe (So.)	
DT	**5**	**Derrick Brown (Jr.)**	79	Andrew Williams (Sr.)	
NT	**95**	**Dontavius Russell (Sr.)**	94	Tyrone Truesdell (So.)	
DE	55	T.D. Moultry (So.)	1	Big Kat Bryant (So.)	
OLB	49	Darrell Williams (Sr.)	31	Chandler Wooten (So.)	
ILB	**57**	**Deshaun Davis (Sr.)**	33	K.J. Britt (So.)	
OLB	48	Montavious Atkinson (Sr.)	51	Richard McBryde (Jr.)	
CB	**12**	**Jamel Dean (Jr.)**	14	Traivon Leonard (So.)	
CB	13	Javaris Davis (Jr.)	4	Noah Igbinoghene (So.)	
SS	24	Daniel Thomas (Jr.)	21	Smoke Monday (Fr.)	
FS	**20**	**Jeremiah Dinson (Jr.)**	9	Jamien Sherwood (Fr.)	
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K	26	Anders Carlson (Fr.)	**KR**	4	Noah Igbinoghene (So.)
P		Arryn Siposs (Fr.)	**PR**	23	Ryan Davis (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Jarrett Stidham, 370-246-3,158-6, 18 TDs
Rushing: Kam Martin, 74 att., 453 yds., 2 TDs
Receiving: Ryan Davis, 84 rec., 815 yds., 5 TDs
Tackles: Deshaun Davis, 82
Sacks: Three players tied with 3.5
Interceptions: Javaris Davis, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Gus Malzahn
Record at School: 45-22 (5 years)
Career Record: 54-25 (6 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Kodi Burns, Chip Lindsey
Defensive Coordinator: Kevin Steele
Auburn, AL • Jordan-Hare Stadium (87,451)

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

LSU Tigers

National Forecast: **26** • SEC West Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **7-5, 4-4 SEC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	2	vs. Miami #
Sept.	8	SE Louisiana
Sept.	15	at Auburn
Sept.	22	Louisiana Tech
Sept.	29	Ole Miss
Oct.	6	at Florida
Oct.	13	Georgia
Oct.	20	Mississippi State
Nov.	3	Alabama
Nov.	10	at Arkansas
Nov.	17	Rice
Nov.	24	at Texas A&M

#Arlington, TX

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 9-4, 6-2 SEC

Sept.	2	vs. BYU #	W	27-0
Sept.	9	Chattanooga	W	45-10
Sept.	16	at Mississippi State	L	7-37
Sept.	23	Syracuse	W	35-26
Sept.	30	Troy	L	21-24
Oct.	7	at Florida	W	17-16
Oct.	14	Auburn	W	27-23
Oct.	21	at Ole Miss	W	40-24
Nov.	4	at Alabama	L	10-24
Nov.	11	Arkansas	W	33-10
Nov.	18	at Tennessee	W	30-10
Nov.	25	Texas A&M	W	45-21
Jan.	1	vs. Notre Dame %	L	17-21

#New Orleans %Citrus Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Terrace Marshall, WR, Bossier City, LA
2. Kelvin Joseph, CB, Baton Rouge, LA
3. JaMarr Chase, WR, Metairie, LA
4. Jarell Cherry, DE, Dallas, TX
5. Chasen Hines, DT, Marshall, TX
6. Travez Moore, DE, Bastrop, LA*
7. Micah Baskerville, ILB, Shreveport, LA
8. Davin Cotton, DT, Shreveport, LA
9. Badara Traore, OT, Hyde Park, MA*
10. Dare Rosenthal, DT, Ferriday, LA

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	27.2 ppg	9	76
Rushing	207.6 ypg	5	28
Passing	203.5 ypg	8	84
Total	411.1 ypg	7	54
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	18.9 ppg	4	14
Rushing	128.4 ypg	3	24
Passing	187.6 ypg	6	21
Total	316.0 ypg	4	12
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
+10	+0.77	3	16

STAT CORNER

+7.8

LSU underachieved vs. the spread by 16.5 points per game over the first four games, then overachieved by 7.8 over the next seven.

OFFENSE The Tigers' traditional run-heavy attack appeared headed for big changes in 2017, when coach Ed Orgeron hired Matt Canada as offensive coordinator. But Orgeron and Canada clashed personally and professionally, Orgeron never finding a comfort level with Canada's misdirection and shifts. He sent Canada (now at Maryland) packing and promoted tight ends coach Steve Ensminger.

Orgeron wants a pro-style attack angled toward the pass, and Ensminger appears poised to give it to him. That's in large part because for the first time since at least 1974, LSU doesn't return a back who rushed for a touchdown last season. Baton Rouge natives Nick Brossette and Clyde Edwards-Helaire are expected to shoulder the load.

The quarterback position vacated by Danny Etling was supposed to be sophomore Myles Brennan's to lose, but he was pushed surprisingly hard in spring practice by junior Justin McMillan and redshirt freshman Lowell Narcisse. Whoever is playing quarterback is expected to make Jonathan Giles, a transfer from Texas Tech who had 1,158 yards receiving and 13 touchdowns in 2016, the top target. Terrace Marshall, the only five-star prospect in the Tigers' 2018 recruiting class, will have a chance to play right away.

DEFENSE LSU spent dearly to keep defensive coordinator Dave Aranda away from Texas A&M, re-signing him for a guaranteed $10 million over four years. Aranda is finally expected to be able to install his entire defensive package in 2018, relying on a couple of key players to lead the way.

Junior inside linebacker Devin White led the SEC with 10.2 tackles per game in 2017 and has an All-American's nose for the football. And sophomore Greedy Williams is a shutdown cornerback in the Patrick Peterson mold.

The Tigers finally get to pair end Breiden Fehoko and tackle Tyler Shelvin after they sat out 2017 — Fehoko as a Texas Tech transfer and Shelvin for academic reasons. They'll team with highly regarded junior end Rashard Lawrence to form a stout defensive front, though Shelvin may be a backup to Ed Alexander.

Finding a cornerback to play opposite Williams is a huge issue. Sophomores Jontre Kirklin and Kary Vincent were battling in the spring, but freshman Kelvin Joseph or grad transfer Terrence Alexander could win out once they arrive.

SPECIALISTS Orgeron used his new 10th assistant slot to make former analyst Greg McMahon his special teams coordinator after Connor Culp and Jack Gonsoulin combined to make just 16-of-27 field goal attempts in 2017. Orgeron also used a scholarship to sign Cole Tracy, a transfer from Assumption College in Massachusetts. The Tigers are expected to continue to use Zach Von Rosenberg for regular punts and Josh Growden for shorter distances.

FINAL ANALYSIS LSU's schedule isn't conducive to finding a path back into the SEC's upper echelon. The Tigers will face two teams that played in the College Football Playoff (Alabama and Georgia) and two teams that played in New Year's Six bowls (Auburn and Miami). Add games at home with Mississippi State and at Texas A&M, and it's difficult to picture the Tigers being able to challenge for SEC West supremacy. The key for Orgeron is not to slip so far that he's facing a must-win-big scenario in 2019 to keep his job.



DEVIN WHITE

"I like Ed (Orgeron), I really do. He can win there, and maybe he can develop into a guy that stays there a while. But he has to let his coaches coach."

— An opposing SEC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	7	Jonathan Giles (Jr.)	17	Racey McMath (So.)	
WR	32	Justin Jefferson (So.)	19	Derrick Dillon (Jr.)	
WR	10	**Stephen Sullivan (Jr.)**	6	Terrace Marshall (Fr.)	
LT	77	**Saahdiq Charles (So.)**	65	Jakori Savage (So.)	
LG	78	**Garrett Brumfield (Sr.)**	68	Damien Lewis (Jr.)	
C	79	Lloyd Cushenberry (So.)	67	Cole Smith (Fr.)	
RG	70	**Ed Ingram (So.)**	68	Damien Lewis (Jr.)	
RT	74	Badara Traore (Jr.)	76	Austin Deculus (So.)	
TE	84	**Foster Moreau (Sr.)**	81	Thaddeus Moss (So.)	
QB	15	Myles Brennan (So.)	2	Lowell Narcisse (Fr.)	
RB	4	Nick Brossette (Sr.)	22	Clyde Edwards-Helaire (So.)	

DEFENSE (5)

DE	91	Breiden Fehoko (Jr.)	92	Neil Farrell (So.)	
NT	99	Ed Alexander (Jr.)	72	Tyler Shelvin (Fr.)	
DE	90	**Rashard Lawrence (Jr.)**	97	Glen Logan (So.)	
BUCK	4	K'Lavon Chaisson (So.)	49	Travez Moore (Jr.)	
OLB	40	**Devin White (Jr.)**	8	Patrick Queen (So.)	
ILB	6	Jacob Phillips (So.)	24	Tyler Taylor (So.)	
OLB	45	Michael Divinity (Jr.)	43	Ray Thornton (So.)	
CB	29	**Greedy Williams (So.)**		Kelvin Joseph (Fr.)	
CB	13	Jontre Kirklin (So.)	11	Terrence Alexander (Sr.)	
S	26	**John Battle (Sr.)**	30	Eric Monroe (So.)	
S	9	**Grant Delpit (So.)**	3	JaCoby Stevens (So.)	

SPECIAL TEAMS

K		Cole Tracy (Sr.)	KR	22	C. Edwards-Helaire (So.)
P	46	Zach Von Rosenberg (So.)	PR	7	Jonathan Giles (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Myles Brennan, 24-14-182-2, 1 TD
Rushing: Nick Brossette, 19 att., 96 yds., 0 TDs
Receiving: Foster Moreau, 24 rec., 278 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: Devin White, 133
Sacks: Devin White, 4.5
Interceptions: Greedy Williams, 6

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Ed Orgeron
Record at School: 15-6 (1+ year)
Career Record: 31-33 (4+ years)
Offensive Coordinator: Steve Ensminger
Defensive Coordinator: Dave Aranda
Baton Rouge, LA • Tiger Stadium (102,321)

Tom DiPace

Ole Miss **Rebels**

National Forecast: **58** • SEC West Prediction: **6** • Projected Record: **5-7, 1-7 SEC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	vs. Texas Tech #
Sept.	8	Southern Illinois
Sept.	15	Alabama
Sept.	22	Kent State
Sept.	29	at LSU
Oct.	6	UL Monroe
Oct.	13	vs. Arkansas %
Oct.	20	Auburn
Nov.	3	South Carolina
Nov.	10	at Texas A&M
Nov.	17	at Vanderbilt
Nov.	22	Mississippi State

#Houston %Little Rock

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 6-6, 3-5 SEC

Sept.	2	South Alabama	W	47-27
Sept.	9	Tennessee-Martin	W	45-23
Sept.	16	at California	L	16-27
Sept.	30	at Alabama	L	3-66
Oct.	7	at Auburn	L	23-44
Oct.	14	Vanderbilt	W	57-35
Oct.	21	LSU	L	24-40
Oct.	28	Arkansas	L	37-38
Nov.	4	at Kentucky	W	37-34
Nov.	11	UL Lafayette	W	50-22
Nov.	18	Texas A&M	L	24-31
Nov.	23	at Mississippi State	W	31-28

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Matt Corral, QB, Long Beach, CA
2. Elijah Moore, WR, Fort Lauderdale, FL
3. Miles Battle, WR, Houston, TX
4. Noah Jefferson, DT, Las Vegas, NV*
5. Jalen Cunningham, DT, Odenville, AL
6. Kevontae' Ruggs, OLB, Montgomery, AL
7. James Williams, DE, Jackson, MS
8. Demarcus Gregory, WR, Duncan, SC
9. Scottie Phillips, RB, Ellisville, MS*
10. Vernon Dasher, OLB, Baxley, GA*

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	32.8 ppg	5	33
Rushing	133.9 ypg	11	104
Passing	328.4 ypg	1	11
Total	462.3 ypg	2	18
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	34.6 ppg	13	110
Rushing	245.3 ypg	13	124
Passing	214.2 ypg	9	52
Total	459.5 ypg	14	116
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
-5	-0.42	12	97

STAT CORNER

7.62

Ole Miss' offense averaged 7.62 yards per play on first downs, fourth in FBS and 0.27 yards ahead of Alabama for first in the SEC.

OFFENSE A.J. Brown, one of the most talented wide receivers in the nation, leads a potentially explosive Ole Miss offense. Brown led the SEC with 75 catches for 1,252 yards last year. He had 11 touchdown catches and is a projected top-10 pick in the 2019 NFL Draft. DK Metcalf, a sophomore, is a matchup problem at 6'4" and is one of three returning receivers who caught at least 39 passes a year ago. Tight end Dawson Knox, savvy and physical in the seam or on crossing routes, is poised for a big season.

The beneficiary of this talented group of pass catchers is senior quarterback Jordan Ta'amu, who showed poise when thrust into the starting role late last season following Shea Patterson's injury. Patterson has since transferred to Michigan, leaving Ta'amu as the unquestioned starter.

A passing game is at its best when boosted by a solid run game, and that's where the questions begin as the Rebels seek to replace 1,000-yard rusher Jordan Wilkins. The leading candidate is junior D'Vaughn Pennamon, a powerful runner who must prove to be healthy after undergoing offseason knee surgery. Pennamon missed the spring, allowing junior college transfer Scottie Phillips and freshman Isaiah Woullard to get some much-needed reps. Junior Eric Swinney ran with the first team in spring and will also compete for the job.

Left tackle Greg Little, a projected first-round pick in 2019, is the anchor of an experienced group that loses only right tackle Rod Taylor from a year ago and returns five players who have started at least eight games.

DEFENSE Defensive coordinator Wesley McGriff hopes increased physicality in the Rebels' front seven will improve a run defense that allowed a staggering 270.5 rushing yards per game against SEC opponents. Senior Detric Bing-Dukes and junior Willie Hibbler emerged from spring practice atop the depth chart at the two linebackers in the 4-2-5 scheme. "We need some size in the box even if we lose a little speed," coach Matt Luke says. "We need to be more physical."

Vernon Dasher played linebacker in junior college last year and is the likely starter at Star, a fifth defensive back who lines up as an outside linebacker when McGriff wants a 4-3 look. Dasher enrolled early and shows a physical style.

Myles Hartsfield and Ken Webster give the Rebels experience at the corners, and Zedrick Woods returns for a third season to start at free safety.

The Rebels hope Victor Evans and Qaadir Sheppard emerge as the next wave of playmakers at end to replace the departed Marquis Haynes and Breeland Speaks.

SPECIALISTS The Rebels will have a new placekicker and punter, both walk-ons. Sophomore Luke Logan will be the kicker. His leg strength is solid, but his accuracy under fire is to be determined. The punter will be Mac Brown.

FINAL ANALYSIS Luke, a popular former player and Ole Miss assistant coach, led the Rebels to a 6–6 mark in a tumultuous 2017 that included the cloud of the NCAA investigation hovering above. His candidacy for the full-time job was not looking strong until the Rebels won three of their last four games, including a 31–28 upset at No. 16 Mississippi State.

Barring a reprieve, Ole Miss is banned from a bowl game for the second straight season. The Rebels have enough firepower on offense to pose some serious problems, but they will need to show significant improvement on defense — most notably against the run — to reach the six-win mark again.



A.J. BROWN

"A.J. Brown might be the best receiver in our league. A physical, tough, catch anything receiver. The question is, can (Jordan) Ta'amu get him the ball consistently?"

— An opposing SEC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)

WR	**14**	**DK Metcalf (So.)**	3	DeMarcus Gregory (Fr.)
WR	**1**	**A.J. Brown (Jr.)**	13	Braylon Sanders (So.)
WR	**5**	**DaMarkus Lodge (Sr.)**		Miles Battle (Fr.)
LT	**74**	**Greg Little (Jr.)**	72	Royce Newman (So.)
LG	**79**	**Javon Patterson (Sr.)**	70	Jordan Sims (Sr.)
C	**50**	**Sean Rawlings (Sr.)**	61	Eli Johnson (So.)
RG	70	Jordan Sims (Sr.)	55	Ben Brown (Fr.)
RT	**67**	**Alex Givens (Jr.)**	72	Royce Newman (So.)
TE	**9**	**Dawson Knox (Jr.)**	15	Octavious Cooley (Jr.)
QB	10	Jordan Ta'amu (Sr.)	2	Matt Corral (Fr.)
RB	28	D'Vaughn Pennamon (Jr.)	22	Scottie Phillips (Jr.)

DEFENSE (4)

DE	4	Victor Evans (Sr.)	41	Brenden Williams (Jr.)
DT	**95**	**Benito Jones (Jr.)**	90	Ross Donelly (Sr.)
DT	**40**	**Josiah Coatney (Jr.)**	12	Austrian Robinson (Jr.)
DE	97	Qaadir Sheppard (Jr.)	89	Ryder Anderson (So.)
LB	43	Detric Bing-Dukes (Sr.)	7	Mohamed Sanogo (So.)
LB	17	Willie Hibbler (Jr.)	32	Josh Clarke (Fr.)
STAR	3	Vernon Dasher (Jr.)	28	Cam Ordway (Sr.)
CB	5	Ken Webster (Sr.)	21	Javien Hamilton (Sr.)
CB	**15**	**Myles Hartsfield (Jr.)**	1	D.D. Bowie (So.)
SS	**36**	**Zedrick Woods (Sr.)**	8	C.J. Miller (So.)
FS	31	Jaylon Jones (Jr.)	26	C.J. Moore (Sr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	92	Luke Logan (So.)	**KR**	1	A.J. Brown (Jr.)
P	96	Mac Brown (So.)	**PR**	31	Jaylon Jones (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Jordan Ta'amu, 173-115-1,682-4, 11 TDs
Rushing: D'Vaughn Pennamon, 53 att., 217 yds., 2 TDs
Receiving: A.J. Brown, 75 rec. 1,252 yds., 11 TDs
Tackles: Josiah Coatney, 65
Sacks: Josiah Coatney, 3.5
Interceptions: C.J. Moore, 3; Javien Hamilton, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Matt Luke
Record at School: 6-6 (1 year)
Career Record: 6-6 (1 year)
Offensive Coordinator: Phil Longo
Defensive Coordinators: Jason Jones, Wesley McGriff
Oxford, MS • Vaught-Hemingway Stadium (64,038)

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

Mississippi State **Bulldogs**

National Forecast: **14** • SEC West Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **9-3, 5-3 SEC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Stephen F. Austin
Sept.	8	at Kansas State
Sept.	15	UL Lafayette
Sept.	22	at Kentucky
Sept.	29	Florida
Oct.	6	Auburn
Oct.	20	at LSU
Oct.	27	Texas A&M
Nov.	3	Louisiana Tech
Nov.	10	at Alabama
Nov.	17	Arkansas
Nov.	22	at Ole Miss

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 9-4, 4-4 SEC

Sept.	2	Charleston Southern	W	49-0
Sept.	9	at Louisiana Tech	W	57-21
Sept.	16	LSU	W	37-7
Sept.	23	at Georgia	L	3-31
Sept.	30	at Auburn	L	10-49
Oct.	14	BYU	W	35-10
Oct.	21	Kentucky	W	45-7
Oct.	28	at Texas A&M	W	35-7
Nov.	4	Massachusetts	W	34-23
Nov.	11	Alabama	L	24-31
Nov.	18	at Arkansas	W	28-21
Nov.	23	Ole Miss	L	28-31
Dec.	30	vs. Louisville #	W	31-27

#TaxSlayer Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Malik Heath, WR, Jackson, MS
2. Devonta Jason, WR, New Orleans, LA
3. Kwatrivous Johnson, OT, Greenwood, MS
4. Jaden Crumedy, DE, Hattiesburg, MS
5. Stephen Guidry, WR, New Roads, LA*
6. Jalen Mayden, QB, Sachse, TX
7. Marcus Murphy, ATH, West Point, MS
8. Fabien Lovett, DE, Olive Branch, MS
9. Aaron Brule, LB, Metairie, LA
10. Geor'quarius Spivey, TE, Monroe, LA

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	32.0 ppg	7	41
Rushing	251.7 ypg	2	11
Passing	166.9 ypg	14	13
Total	418.6 ypg	6	46
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	20.9 ppg	6	26
Rushing	131.6 ypg	4	28
Passing	174.7 ypg	4	12
Total	306.3 ypg	3	10
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
-1	-0.08	8	72

STAT CORNER

47.1

MSU gained 5.0 or more yards on 44.8% of its non-sack carries, sixth in FBS. Nick Fitzgerald's 2017 average: 47.1%.

OFFENSE In his first Power 5 head-coaching job, former Penn State offensive coordinator Joe Moorhead will call his own plays — a good thing if you are a Mississippi State fan.

Nick Fitzgerald is healthy once again after a gruesome ankle injury ended his 2017 season in the Egg Bowl. The senior is a proven runner who has yet to develop into a consistent passer, though a lack of weapons at wide receiver is partly to blame for his less-than-impressive stats. The belief is that Moorhead will having Fitzgerald looking downfield more often in 2018.

That might be easier this fall thanks to an influx of talent at wide receiver that has given this position group a much-needed facelift. Newcomers Stephen Guidry, Devonta Jason and Malik Heath all arrive with strong credentials, and they will each be counted on to contribute right away.

Aeris Williams is a 1,000-yard back who is a tough, reliable runner. Moorhead used his running backs as receivers much more than Dan Mullen — Saquon Barkley caught 54 passes last season, 31 more than all of MSU's backs combined — so it will be interesting to see who develops into a threat in the passing game.

The Bulldogs welcome back four offensive line starters, but the one loss is a big one. Left tackle Martinas Rankin was an All-SEC player last season, and Mississippi State will certainly miss him.

DEFENSE Bob Shoop is Mississippi State's fifth defensive coordinator in as many years, and he's at his third different SEC school. The Bulldogs are certainly hoping his results are more like what he did with Vanderbilt and Penn State and less like Tennessee's struggling unit the last two seasons.

Shoop should have no problem establishing a pass rush: Montez Sweat had double-digit sacks as a junior and came back for his senior season, and Jeffery Simmons is a tackle-end combo who makes all kinds of plays, from sacks to blocked kicks to scoring TDs.

The top two tacklers from a year ago return in safeties Mark McLaurin and Johnathan Abram. The position to watch will actually be linebacker, where sophomores Willie Gay and Erroll Thompson are starting to really emerge as difference makers. What Shoop must do is maintain the same philosophy that predecessor Todd Grantham brought back to Mississippi State: attack. A year ago, MSU was in the top five in the league in sacks, tackles for a loss and turnovers created. With many of the same faces back, Shoop can change schemes (from Grantham's 3-4 to his preferred 4-3) but does not need to change the mindset of what was one of the better defenses in the league in 2017.

SPECIALISTS At a position that has long been a sore spot for the Bulldogs, placekicker Jace Christmann made all 42 extra-point attempts and 12-of-14 field goals, becoming a fan favorite in the process. The Bulldogs need a new punter, and former high school All-American Tucker Day could fit in nicely there.

FINAL ANALYSIS When Mullen left Mississippi State after nine seasons to return to Florida, the school elected to go outside of the SEC and hire Moorhead. There's some risk there (mostly related to recruiting), but the hire was hailed by outside observers, and 2018 could prove why immediately. Mississippi State lost very little of consequence from its 2017 team, and despite a fairly challenging schedule, there's reason for optimism in Starkville. Eight wins are expected, and some believe that this could be a 10-win team with the right breaks.



NICK FITZGERALD

"I don't know if Nick Fitzgerald can be ready by August. That was a brutal injury. ... But that's one tough son of a gun. If anyone can do it, he will."

— An opposing SEC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (9)

WR	1	Stephen Guidry (Jr.)	6	Jamal Couch (Jr.)	
WR	3	Devonta Jason (Fr.)	**86**	**Jesse Jackson (Sr.)**	
WR	**23**	**Keith Mixon (Jr.)**	9	Malik Dear (Jr.)	
LT	55	Greg Eiland (So.)	78	Tyre Phillips (Jr.)	
LG	**73**	**Darryl Williams (Jr.)**	75	Michael Story (Jr.)	
C	**74**	**Elgton Jenkins (Sr.)**	54	Blake Mitchell (So.)	
RG	**61**	**Deion Calhoun (Sr.)**	56	Dareuan Parker (So.)	
RT	**51**	**Stewart Reese (So.)**	70	Tommy Champion (Jr.)	
TE	**82**	**Farrod Green (Jr.)**	81	Justin Johnson (Sr.)	
QB	**7**	**Nick Fitzgerald (Sr.)**	10	Keytaon Thompson (So.)	
RB	**22**	**Aeris Williams (Sr.)**	8	Kylin Hill (So.)	

DEFENSE (7)

DE	**4**	**Gerri Green (Sr.)**	52	Kobe Jones (So.)
DT	**94**	**Jeffery Simmons (Jr.)**	90	Grant Harris (Sr.)
DT	**95**	**Braxton Hoyett (Sr.)**	34	Cory Thomas (Sr.)
DE	**9**	**Montez Sweat (Sr.)**	43	Fletcher Adams (Jr.)
LB	40	Erroll Thompson (So.)	50	Tim Washington (Jr.)
LB	6	Willie Gay (So.)	**10**	**Leo Lewis (Jr.)**
NB	32	Brian Cole (Jr.)	8	Maurice Smitherman (Jr.)
CB	24	Chris Rayford (Sr.)	33	Tyler Williams (Fr.)
CB	13	Cameron Dantzler (So.)	2	Jamal Peters (Sr.)
S	**41**	**Mark McLaurin (Sr.)**	29	C.J. Morgan (So.)
S	**3**	**Johnathan Abram (Sr.)**	7	Marcus Murphy (Fr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	47	Jace Christmann (So.)	KR	2	Reggie Todd (So.)
P	42	Tucker Day (So.)	PR	4	Deddrick Thomas (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Nick Fitzgerald, 286-159-1,782-11, 15 TDs
Rushing: Aeris Williams, 236 att., 1,107 yds., 6 TDs
Receiving: Jesse Jackson, 27 rec., 276 yds., 0 TDs
Tackles: Mark McLaurin, 79
Sacks: Montez Sweat, 10.5
Interceptions: Mark McLaurin, 6

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Joe Moorhead
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: 38-13 (4 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Luke Getsy
Defensive Coordinator: Bob Shoop
Starkville, MS • Davis Wade Stadium at Scott Field (61,337)

AP

Texas A&M **Aggies**

National Forecast: **25** • SEC West Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **8-4, 5-3 SEC**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	Northwestern State
Sept.	8	Clemson
Sept.	15	UL Monroe
Sept.	22	at Alabama
Sept.	29	vs Arkansas #
Oct.	6	Kentucky
Oct.	13	at South Carolina
Oct.	27	at Mississippi State
Nov.	3	at Auburn
Nov.	10	Ole Miss
Nov.	17	UAB
Nov.	24	LSU

#Arlington, TX

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 4-4 SEC

Sept.	3	at UCLA	L	44-45
Sept.	9	Nicholls	W	24-14
Sept.	16	UL Lafayette	W	45-21
Sept.	23	vs. Arkansas # (ot)	W	50-43
Sept.	30	South Carolina	W	24-17
Oct.	7	Alabama	L	19-27
Oct.	14	at Florida	W	19-17
Oct.	28	Mississippi State	L	14-35
Nov.	4	Auburn	L	27-42
Nov.	11	New Mexico	W	55-14
Nov.	18	at Ole Miss	W	31-24
Nov.	25	at LSU	L	21-45
Dec.	29	vs. Wake Forest %	L	52-55

#Arlington %Belk Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Leon O'Neal Jr., S, Cypress, TX
2. Jalen Preston, WR, Manvel, TX
3. Colten Blanton, OT, Cypress, TX
4. Bobby Brown, DT, Arlington, TX
5. Max Wright, DE, Katy, TX
6. Jordan Moore, CB, Yoakum, TX
7. Tank Jenkins, OG, Montgomery, AL
8. Jeremiah Martin, DE, San Bernardino, CA
9. Jashaun Corbin, RB, Rockledge, FL
10. James Foster, QB, Montgomery, AL

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SEC	NATIONAL
Scoring	32.7 ppg	6	34
Rushing	155.6 ypg	10	78
Passing	251.2 ypg	3	47
Total	406.8 ypg	8	56
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	30.7 ppg	10	87
Rushing	170.8 ypg	9	71
Passing	237.6 ypg	11	85
Total	408.5 ypg	9	78
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SEC**	**NATIONAL**
+3	+0.23	5	46

STAT CORNER

-10.4

In Jimbo Fisher's first year as FSU head coach, the Noles allowed 10.4 fewer points per game. Can he replicate that in College Station?

OFFENSE A year ago, Texas A&M's offense was at times explosive, at times stagnant. The Aggies scored at least 44 points in three of their first four games but mustered fewer than 20 points three times in October. Perhaps coach Jimbo Fisher's pro-style scheme will foster more consistency. If not, maybe the fact that sophomore quarterbacks Nick Starkel and Kellen Mond now have a year of playing experience will.

Starkel closed last season as the starter and passed for 1,414 yards and 11 touchdowns in the last four games. However, Mond had good moments, too, and is a better runner.

No one on the roster runs better than speedy junior running back Trayveon Williams, who has rushed for more than 1,800 yards in his career and has seven touchdowns that have covered between 22 and 89 yards.

A&M is seeking a similar big-play threat to emerge at receiver. Jhamon Ausbon caught 50 passes as a true freshman. He averaged 11.4 yards, but that figure could spike as his role grows. Sophomore Camron Buckley showed flashes that he could be a deep threat, too. The Aggies also have big hopes for incoming freshman Jalen Preston, a four-star receiver who was one of the most coveted recruits in Texas.

Major improvement is needed in the line, where only junior center Erik McCoy has job security. Carson Green shows great promise at right tackle, but there are questions everywhere else. Sophomore Jared Hocker figures to unseat oft-injured senior Connor Lanfear at right guard. Koda Martin, the projected left tackle, transferred to Syracuse.

DEFENSE Though A&M allowe d at least 35 points in six games last season, there actually is great optimism that the Aggies will make giant strides under defensive coordinator Mike Elko.

Elko, hired away from Notre Dame, has material to work with. Senior end Landis Durham posted 10.5 sacks a year ago. Junior linebacker Tyrel Dodson and sophomore safety Derrick Tucker appear to be rising stars. Defensive tackles Kingsley Keke and Justin Madubuike are proven. Safety Donovan Wilson returns after missing almost all of last season because of injury.

The chief concerns are depth at defensive end and upgrading the play at cornerback, where inexperience with freshmen Debione Renfro and Myles Jones was frequently exploited last season. Clifford Chattman is expected to be the solution at one corner. He was lauded as the best on the roster before being ruled academically ineligible in '17. If Renfro, Jones or junior Charles Oliver makes progress, the secondary could go from liability to area of strength.

SPECIALISTS Placekicker Daniel LaCamera aims to build on a strong sophomore year in which he converted 17-of-20 field goal attempts and hit from 52 yards. The departure of Christian Kirk to the NFL leaves a big void in the return game.

FINAL ANALYSIS Weary from four consecutive seasons with eight wins or fewer, A&M pulled off a major coup and lured Fisher to College Station. The Aggies have bet $75 million over 10 years that Fisher can duplicate the success he had at Florida State, where he won the 2013 national championship. Fisher inherits 15 returning starters and some top-flight talent. But the Aggies have lacked the physicality and depth to compete for championships in the rugged SEC. If significant strides are made in those areas, A&M could make a run at exceeding the eight-win plateau. Competing immediately for an SEC championship may be asking for too much too soon.



TRAYVEON WILLIAMS

"I'll tell you what, if Jimbo (Fisher) thinks the media was too harsh on him at FSU, wait until he finishes fourth again in the West."

— An opposing SEC assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

		OFFENSE (7)		
WR	2	**Jhamon Ausbon (So.)**		Jalen Preston (Fr.)
WR	14	Camron Buckley (So.)	6	Roshauud Paul (So.)
WR	16	Klyde Chriss (So.)	13	Kendrick Rogers (So.)
LT	65	Dan Moore (So.)	74	Kellen Diesch (So.)
LG	78	**Keaton Sutherland (Sr.)**	77	**Ryan McCollum (So.)**
C	64	**Erik McCoy (Jr.)**	76	Colton Prater (Jr.)
RG	73	Jared Hocker (So.)	70	**Connor Lanfear (Sr.)**
RT	54	Carson Green (So.)	74	Kellen Diesch (So.)
TE	81	Jace Sternberger (Jr.)	85	Camron Horry (Fr.)
QB	17	Nick Starkel (So.)	11	**Kellen Mond (So.)**
RB	5	**Trayveon Williams (Jr.)**	25	Kendall Bussey (Jr.)
		DEFENSE (7)		
DE	46	**Landis Durham (Sr.)**	3	Tyree Johnson (Fr.)
DT	88	**Kingsley Keke (Sr.)**	93	Jayden Peevy (So.)
DT	95	Justin Madubuike (So.)	5	Daylon Mack (Sr.)
DE	2	Michael Clemons (Jr.)	33	Ondario Robinson (Fr.)
LB	25	**Tyrel Dodson (Jr.)**	19	Anthony Hines (So.)
LB	42	**Otaro Alaka (Sr.)**	32	Santino Marchiol (Fr.)
ROV	7	Buddy Johnson (So.)	20	Ikenna Okeke (So.)
CB	22	Clifford Chattman (So.)	10	Myles Jones (So.)
CB	21	**Charles Oliver (Jr.)**	29	**Debione Renfro (So.)**
S	6	Donovan Wilson (Sr.)	11	Larry Pryor (Jr.)
S	4	**Derrick Tucker (So.)**	14	Keldrick Carper (So.)
		SPECIAL TEAMS		
K	36	Daniel LaCamera (Sr.)	KR 5	Trayveon Williams (Jr.)
P	34	Braden Mann (Jr.)	PR 6	Roshauud Paul (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Nick Starkel, 205-123-1,793-6, 14 TDs
Rushing: Trayveon Williams, 173 att., 798 yds., 8 TDs
Receiving: Jhamon Ausbon, 50 rec., 571 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: Tyrel Dodson, 105
Sacks: Landis Durham, 10.5
Interceptions: Tyrel Dodson, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Jimbo Fisher
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: 83-23 (8 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Darrell Dickey
Defensive Coordinator: Mike Elko
College Station, TX • Kyle Field (102,733)

Chris Covatta

SUN BELT PREVIEW

East | Predicted Order of Finish | West



1 TROY
TROJANS
8-5, 6-2 Sun Belt



2 APPALACHIAN STATE
MOUNTAINEERS
8-4, 5-3 Sun Belt



3 GEORGIA STATE
PANTHERS
5-7, 4-4 Sun Belt



4 GEORGIA SOUTHERN
EAGLES
4-8, 3-5 Sun Belt



5 COASTAL CAROLINA
CHANTICLEERS
3-9, 2-6 Sun Belt

1 ARKANSAS STATE
RED WOLVES
9-4, 6-2 Sun Belt



2 ULM
WARHAWKS
6-6, 5-3 Sun Belt



3 LOUISIANA
RAGIN' CAJUNS
6-6, 4-4 Sun Belt



4 SOUTH ALABAMA
JAGUARS
5-7, 4-4 Sun Belt



5 TEXAS STATE
BOBCATS
3-9, 1-7 Sun Belt



Sun Belt Championship: **Arkansas State over Troy**

GAMES TO WATCH

SEPT. 1
APP. STATE AT PENN STATE
The Mountaineers have lost 10 straight games to Power 5 opponents since shocking the world with a 34–32 win at Michigan in 2007.

SEPT. 1
CCU AT SOUTH CAROLINA
Popular Coastal Carolina coach Joe Moglia will make his return after missing the 2017 season due to a medical condition.

SEPT. 1
BOISE STATE AT TROY
Troy hosts Boise State in a huge game between two of the top Group of 5 programs in the country. The Trojans lost at Boise last year, 24–13.

SEPT. 8
ARKANSAS STATE AT ALABAMA
The Red Wolves made Nebraska sweat last year in a Week 1 loss in Lincoln. Alabama, however, is not Nebraska. This is a Herculean task for A-State.

SEPT. 14
GEORGIA STATE AT MEMPHIS
After winning seven games in Shawn Elliott's first season, Georgia State can make a statement against Memphis on a nationally televised Friday night affair.

SEPT. 22
UNLV AT ARKANSAS STATE
Arkansas State will have an opportunity to notch a decent non-conference win when improving UNLV makes the trip to Jonesboro.

App State: Peter Gwaltney/App State Athletics; Louisiana: Brad Kemp/RaginCajuns.com; South Alabama: Brad Puckett/South Alabama; All others courtesy of each school's athletic department

2018 Unit Rankings

	QB	RB	WR/TE	OL	DL	LB	DB
APPALACHIAN STATE	5	1	5	3	3	3	1
ARKANSAS STATE	1	3	3	4	1	7	4
COASTAL CAROLINA	10	7	8	9	8	9	8
GEORGIA STATE	7	10	2	7	4	2	6
GEORGIA SOUTHERN	6	6	10	5	6	8	5
LOUISIANA	4	2	6	6	7	10	9
SOUTH ALABAMA	8	8	7	8	5	4	3
TEXAS STATE	9	9	9	10	10	5	10
TROY	3	4	4	1	2	1	2
ULM	2	5	1	2	9	6	7

Recruiting by School

1. Georgia Southern
2. Arkansas State
3. Georgia State
4. Troy
5. Texas State
6. South Alabama
7. Appalachian State
8. Coastal Carolina
9. ULM
10. Louisiana


JUSTICE HANSEN, ARKANSAS STATE


JALIN MOORE, APPALACHIAN STATE

2018 Bowl Projections

Dollar General Bowl: Arkansas State vs. Northern Illinois
New Orleans Bowl: Louisiana vs. UAB
Camellia Bowl: Troy vs. Miami (Ohio)
Cure Bowl: Appalachian State vs. Temple
Arizona Bowl: ULM vs. Colorado State

Sun Belt Coordinator Carousel

Appalachian State: Defense
New: Bryan Brown, Dale Jones
Old: Scot Sloan, Nate Woody

Coastal Carolina: Defense
New: Marvin Sanders
Old: Mickey Matthews

Georgia Southern: Offense
New: Bob DeBesse
Old: Bryan Cook

Georgia Southern: Defense
New: Scot Sloan
Old: Lorenzo Costantini

Louisiana: Offense
New: Rob Sale
Old: Will Hall

Louisiana: Defense
New: Ron Roberts
Old: Charlie Harbison, Mike Lucas

South Alabama: Offense
New: Kenny Edenfield
Old: Bryant Vincent

South Alabama: Defense
New: Greg Stewart
Old: Kane Wommack

Texas State: Offense
New: Zak Kuhr
Old: Parker Fleming, Zak Kuhr

Texas State: Defense
New: Chris Woods
Old: Randall McCray

Troy: Offense
New: Matt Moore, Sean Reagan

SEPT. 22
TROY AT ULM
Are the Warhawks ready to make a move in Year 3 under Matt Viator? A win over Troy would be a step in the right direction.

OCT. 6
LOUISIANA AT TEXAS STATE
Texas State is 1–15 in the Sun Belt in Everett Withers' two seasons. There will be pressure to break through in 2017 — especially at home.

OCT. 9
APP. STATE AT ARKANSAS STATE
These two programs have gone a combined 27–5 in the Sun Belt over the last two seasons but have not faced each other since 2015.

OCT. 23
TROY AT SOUTH ALABAMA
In the Trojans' first game after knocking off LSU in Baton Rouge, Troy dropped a 19–8 decision at home to South Alabama last season.

NOV. 24
TROY AT APP. STATE
The Sun Belt is splitting into divisions in 2018, and this game figures to go a long way in determining the champion of the East.

NOV. 24
LOUISIANA AT ULM
Louisiana has won eight of the last 10 in this intra-state rivalry but lost a 56–50 double-overtime heartbreaker in Lafayette last season.



PENNY HART, GEORGIA STATE

Sun Belt Returning Leaders

Passing	ATT	COMP	PCT	YDS	TD	INT	AVG/G
Justice Hansen, Arkansas State	487	305	62.6	3,967	37	16	330.6
Caleb Evans, ULM	344	211	61.3	2,868	17	6	239.0
Dallas Davis, South Alabama	175	100	57.1	1,355	8	7	150.6

Rushing	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Jalin Moore, Appalachian State	183	1,037	5.7	12	58	94.3
Warren Wand, Arkansas State	138	715	5.2	6	82	71.5
Trey Ragas, Louisiana	142	813	5.7	9	54	67.8

Receiving	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	AVG/G
Penny Hart, Georgia State	74	1,121	15.2	8	70	93.4
Marcus Green, ULM	55	847	15.4	5	80	70.6
Justin McInnis, Arkansas State	49	800	16.3	4	73	66.7

Tackles: Bryan London, Texas State (91); Anthony Flory, Appalachian State (87)
Sacks: Hunter Reese, Troy (6.5); Two players tied with 5
Interceptions: Clifton Duck, Appalachian State (6); Two players tied with 5

2017 Sun Belt Standings

	SUN BELT	OVERALL
Troy	7-1	11-2
Appalachian State	7-1	9-4
Arkansas State	6-2	7-5
Georgia State	5-3	7-5
ULM	4-4	4-8
Louisiana	4-4	5-7
New Mexico State	4-4	7-6
Idaho	3-5	4-8
South Alabama	3-5	4-8
Coastal Carolina	2-6	3-9
Georgia Southern	2-6	2-10
Texas State	1-7	2-10

2017 Bowl Results

New Orleans Bowl: Troy 50, North Texas 30

Cure Bowl: Georgia State 27, Western Kentucky 17

Camellia Bowl: Middle Tennessee 35, Arkansas State 30

Dollar General Bowl: Appalachian State 34, Toledo 0

Arizona Bowl: New Mexico State 26, Utah State 20 (ot)

2017 SUN BELT TEAM STATS & RANKINGS

OFFENSE

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
APP STATE	33.5 (3)	223.6 (1)	216.2 (8)	439.8 (4)
ARKANSAS STATE	37.8 (1)	152.6 (6)	342.2 (1)	494.8 (1)
COASTAL CARO.	23.7 (7)	156.3 (5)	189.1 (11)	345.3 (9)
GEORGIA SO.	20.8 (9)	222.3 (2)	110.0 (12)	332.3 (12)
GEORGIA STATE	20.3 (10)	117.3 (10)	270.7 (4)	388.0 (7)
IDAHO	20.9 (8)	124.6 (9)	224.9 (7)	349.5 (8)
LOUISIANA	28.2 (6)	183.7 (3)	214.8 (9)	398.5 (6)
NEW MEXICO ST.	29.3 (5)	106.8 (11)	340.2 (2)	446.9 (3)
SOUTH ALABAMA	19.8 (11)	97.3 (12)	237.1 (6)	334.3 (11)
TEXAS STATE	17.3 (12)	134.1 (8)	205.7 (10)	339.8 (10)
TROY	31.5 (4)	143.9 (7)	269.6 (5)	413.5 (5)
ULM	33.9 (2)	170.3 (4)	287.7 (3)	458.0 (2)

DEFENSE

	SCORING	RUSH	PASS	TOTAL
APP STATE	20.2 (2)	137.5 (4)	205.1 (1)	342.5 (2)
ARKANSAS STATE	25.8 (T4)	136.1 (2)	241.4 (7)	377.5 (3)
COASTAL CARO.	34.0 (10)	169.5 (9)	241.3 (6)	410.8 (8)
GEORGIA SO.	32.2 (8)	180.3 (10)	230.1 (3)	410.4 (7)
GEORGIA STATE	24.8 (3)	136.4 (3)	251.4 (8)	387.8 (4)
IDAHO	25.8 (T4)	168.1 (8)	222.3 (2)	390.4 (5)
LOUISIANA	40.0 (11)	236.6 (12)	256.1 (9)	492.7 (11)
NEW MEXICO ST.	29.8 (7)	166.5 (7)	234.4 (5)	400.8 (6)
SOUTH ALABAMA	26.5 (6)	151.8 (6)	265.9 (10)	417.8 (9)
TEXAS STATE	33.6 (9)	141.7 (5)	297.3 (11)	438.9 (10)
TROY	18.5 (1)	105.3 (1)	231.3 (4)	336.6 (1)
ULM	41.0 (12)	232.8 (11)	299.3 (12)	532.1 (12)

ALL-SUN BELT TEAM

First-Team Offense

QB	**Justice Hansen**	6-4	218	Sr.	Arkansas State
RB	**Jalin Moore**	5-11	207	Sr.	Appalachian State
RB	**Trey Ragas**	5-11	227	So.	Louisiana
AP	**Marcus Green**	5-8	188	Sr.	ULM
WR	**Penny Hart**	5-10	180	Jr.	Georgia State
WR	**Justin McInnis**	6-6	210	Sr.	Arkansas State
TE	**Ellis Richardson**	6-3	240	Sr.	Georgia Southern
C	**Deontae Crumitie**	6-2	296	Sr.	Troy
OL	**Lanard Bonner**	6-5	310	Sr.	Arkansas State
OL	**Kevin Dotson**	6-4	303	Jr.	Louisiana
OL	**Noah Fisher**	6-5	315	Sr.	South Alabama
OL	**Victor Johnson**	6-5	290	Jr.	Appalachian State


JUSTIN MCINNIS, ARKANSAS STATE


LOGAN HUNT, GEORGIA SOUTHERN

First-Team Defense

DL	**Ronheen Bingham**	6-2	241	Sr.	Arkansas State
DL	**Joe Dillon**	6-3	232	Jr.	Louisiana
DL	**Logan Hunt**	6-2	270	Sr.	Georgia Southern
DL	**Trevon Sanders**	6-0	310	Sr.	Troy
LB	**Anthony Flory**	6-2	233	Sr.	Appalachian State
LB	**Bryan London**	6-2	232	Jr.	Texas State
LB	**Hunter Reese**	6-2	221	Sr.	Troy
CB	**Blace Brown**	6-0	186	Sr.	Troy
CB	**Clifton Duck**	5-10	175	Jr.	Appalachian State
S	**Justin Clifton**	6-0	204	Sr.	Arkansas State
S	**Cedarius Rookard**	6-1	210	Sr.	Troy

First-Team Specialists

K	**Gavin Patterson**	5-7	195	Sr.	South Alabama
P	**Corliss Waitman**	6-2	205	Sr.	South Alabama
KR	**Marcus Jones**	5-9	170	So.	Troy
PR	**Marcus Jones**	5-9	170	So.	Troy

SECOND-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Caleb Evans**	6-2	210	Jr.	ULM
RB	**Jamarius Henderson**	5-11	200	Jr.	Troy
RB	**Warren Wand**	5-5	191	Sr.	Arkansas State
AP	**Malcolm Williams**	5-10	185	Sr.	Coastal Carolina
WR	**Deondre Douglas**	6-1	197	Sr.	Troy
WR	**Jamarius Way**	6-4	215	Sr.	South Alabama
TE	**Collin Reed**	6-3	248	Jr.	Appalachian State
C	**Jacob Still**	6-1	297	So.	Arkansas State
OL	**Aaron Brewer**	6-3	270	Jr.	Texas State
OL	**Tristan Crowder**	6-4	314	Jr.	Troy
OL	**Kirk Kelley**	6-4	310	Jr.	Troy
OL	**Curtis Rainey**	6-2	290	Sr.	Georgia Southern

SECOND-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Marterious Allen**	6-2	270	Sr.	Georgia State
DL	**Raymond Johnson**	6-3	240	So.	Georgia Southern
DL	**Myquon Stout**	6-1	286	Sr.	Appalachian State
DL	**Tyree Turner**	6-1	190	Jr.	South Alabama
LB	**Tron Folsom**	6-2	218	Jr.	Troy
LB	**Frankie Griffin**	6-0	205	Sr.	Texas State
LB	**Michael Shaw**	6-4	230	Sr.	Georgia State
CB	**Monquavion Brinson**	5-11	180	Jr.	Georgia Southern
CB	**Tae Hayes**	5-11	185	Sr.	Appalachian State
S	**B.J. Edmonds**	6-0	206	Jr.	Arkansas State
S	**Nigel Lawrence**	5-11	190	Sr.	South Alabama

SECOND-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Tyler Bass**	5-10	180	Jr.	Georgia Southern
P	**Cody Grace**	6-2	223	Jr.	Arkansas State
KR	**Marcus Green**	5-8	188	Sr.	ULM
PR	**Marcus Green**	5-8	188	Sr.	ULM


Jamarius Way
South Alabama


Wesley Fields
Georgia Southern


Fitz Wattley
Coastal Carolina


Marcus Green
ULM

THIRD-TEAM OFFENSE

QB	**Zac Thomas**	6-2	207	So.	Appalachian State
RB	**Wesley Fields**	6-5	205	Sr.	Georgia Southern
RB	**Derrick Gore**	5-10	213	Sr.	ULM
AP	**Thomas Hennigan**	6-2	210	So.	Appalachian State
WR	**Ryheem Malone**	5-9	187	Sr.	Louisiana
WR	**RJ Turner**	6-2	204	Jr.	ULM
TE	**Chase Rogers**	6-4	246	So.	Louisiana
C	**Noah Hannon**	6-2	260	So.	Appalachian State
OL	**Hunter Atkinson**	6-5	285	Jr.	Georgia State
OL	**Brock Hoffman**	6-3	310	So.	Coastal Carolina
OL	**Robert Hunt**	6-5	336	Jr.	Louisiana
OL	**Eastwood Thomas**	6-5	315	Jr.	ULM

THIRD-TEAM DEFENSE

DL	**Riley Cole**	6-3	240	So.	South Alabama
DL	**Hunter Moreton**	6-1	293	So.	Arkansas State
DL	**Ja'ree Tolbert**	6-0	295	Sr.	Coastal Carolina
DL	**Marcus Webb**	6-3	252	Jr.	Troy
LB	**Bull Barge**	5-10	225	Sr.	South Alabama
LB	**David Griffith**	6-1	213	Sr.	ULM
LB	**Silas Kelly**	6-4	225	So.	Coastal Carolina
CB	**Marcus Jones**	5-9	170	So.	Troy
CB	**Jerome Smith**	5-10	180	Sr.	Georgia State
S	**Joshua Moon**	6-0	200	Sr.	Georgia Southern
S	**Fitz Wattley**	5-11	210	Sr.	Coastal Carolina

THIRD-TEAM SPECIALISTS

K	**Sawyer Williams**	5-11	202	Jr.	Arkansas State
P	**Evan Rabon**	6-0	160	Sr.	Coastal Carolina
KR	**Raymond Calais**	5-9	180	Jr.	Louisiana
PR	**Thomas Hennigan**	6-2	210	So.	Appalachian State

McInnis, Wattley, Green: AP; Hart: Ga. State Athletics; Hunt, Fields: Ga. Southern Athletics

Appalachian State **Mountaineers**

National Forecast: **77** • Sun Belt East Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **8-4, 5-3 Sun Belt**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at Penn State
Sept.	8	at Charlotte
Sept.	15	Southern Miss
Sept.	22	Gardner-Webb
Sept.	29	South Alabama
Oct.	9	at Arkansas State
Oct.	20	UL Lafayette
Oct.	25	at Georgia Southern
Nov.	3	at Coastal Carolina
Nov.	10	at Texas State
Nov.	17	Georgia State
Nov.	24	Troy

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 9-4, 7-1 SUN BELT

Sept.	2	at Georgia	L	10-31
Sept.	9	Savannah State	W	54-7
Sept.	16	at Texas State	W	20-13
Sept.	23	Wake Forest	L	19-20
Oct.	7	New Mexico State	W	45-31
Oct.	14	at Idaho	W	23-20
Oct.	21	Coastal Carolina	W	37-29
Oct.	28	at Massachusetts (ot)	L	27-30
Nov.	4	at UL Monroe	L	45-52
Nov.	9	Georgia Southern	W	27-6
Nov.	25	at Georgia State	W	31-10
Dec.	2	UL Lafayette	W	63-14
Dec.	23	vs. Toledo #	W	34-0

#Dollar General Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Braden Collins, WR, Knoxville, TN
2. Jay Person, OLB, Cleveland, TN
3. Harrison Taylor, DL, McDonough, GA
4. Trey Ross, TE, Sophia, NC
5. Zareon Hayes, OLB, Dillon, SC
6. Stephon Brown, QB, Kernersville, NC
7. Brock Mattison, OLB, Buford, GA
8. Henry Pearson, TE, Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ
9. Anderson Hardy, OT, Raleigh, NC
10. Trey Cobb, OLB, Waycross, GA

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SBC	NATIONAL
Scoring	33.5 ppg	3	30
Rushing	223.6 ypg	1	22
Passing	216.2 ypg	8	75
Total	439.8 ypg	4	31
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	20.2 ppg	2	21
Rushing	137.5 ypg	4	36
Passing	205.1 ypg	1	39
Total	342.5 ypg	2	29
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
+12	+0.92	1	11

STAT CORNER

.900

ASU lost its first two Sun Belt games after jumping to FBS in 2014. Since then, the Mountaineers are 27-3, a .900 win percentage.

OFFENSE The Mountaineers enter a new era with the departure of quarterback Taylor Lamb, a four-year starter who completed 61 percent of his passes for 2,737 yards and 27 TDs and rushed for 584 yards and five touchdowns last season. They also bid farewell to the right side of the offensive line, losing future pros Colby Gossett and Beau Nunn.

Luckily for the Mountaineers, senior running back Jalin Moore, the 2016 Sun Belt Offensive Player of the Year, returns and will be healthy after battling injury in 2017. Moore still managed 1,037 rushing yards and 12 touchdowns on 183 carries last fall. He'll be backed up by sophomore Marcus Williams, who went for 500 yards and two touchdowns.

As always, App State will lean on its run game, and that should benefit sophomore quarterback Zac Thomas, who will likely win the job over Jacob Huesman. Thomas was effective as a backup last season, and he showed promise as a runner.

He'll have options in the passing game with the return of Thomas Hennigan (45 catches for 585 yards) and Jalen Virgil (20 for 364). Kansas State transfers Corey Sutton and Dominique Heath will give App State an instant boost, as will the speedy Darrynton Evans, who missed 2017 due to injury.

DEFENSE There were uncharacteristic struggles before the Mountaineers pulled it together late, allowing total of 30 points over the final four games, highlighted by a dominant 34–0 shutout of Toledo in the Dollar General Bowl.

The architect is gone, with defensive coordinator Nate Woody moving on to Georgia Tech, as are six starters, including leading tackler Eric Boggs (102 tackles), lineman Tee Sims (9.5 sacks) and safety A.J. Howard (66 tackles) from a group that finished 29th nationally in total defense.

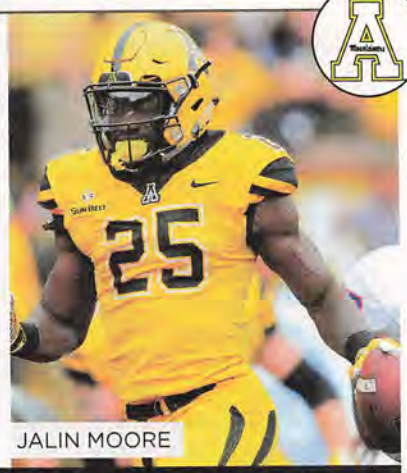
Still, the Mountaineers should field a dominant secondary thanks to cornerbacks Clifton Duck (11 career INTs) and Tae Hayes and safety Desmond Franklin.

App State's nose tackle doesn't post big numbers in its 3-4 scheme, but Myquon Stout is a load and should help free up end Okon Godwin to make plays. Senior linebacker Anthony Flory takes over as the voice of the defense.

Things won't look much different under new coordinator Bryan Brown, who spent six years coaching the Mountaineer cornerbacks.

SPECIALISTS The kicking game was an adventure, with Michael Rubino struggling with consistency, hitting 9-of-15 field goal attempts before Chandler Staton took over in October and finished strong, making 8-of-9 with two from 50 yards or more. Sophomore Xavier Subotsch has a firm hold on the punting job after averaging 39.8 yards per kick last season. Heath is a dangerous return man.

FINAL ANALYSIS There are major departures to account for, but there's no reason to believe App State won't contend for its third straight Sun Belt championship, and at the very least, reach a fourth straight bowl game. Scott Satterfield's program sticks to its proven formula of pounding the run to control the game and playing aggressively on defense. The faces will be different, but there's more than enough talent in the backfield and on the offensive line to keep it rolling. The only question, of course: When will a major program make Satterfield an offer he can't refuse?



JALIN MOORE

"They don't do a lot on offense, but it works. They are really the example for any team transitioning up to FBS. They've done it better than anyone."

— An opposing Sun Belt assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (4)

WR	**5**	**Thomas Hennigan (So.)**		Dominique Heath (Sr.)
WR	80	Corey Sutton (So.)	14	Malik Williams (So.)
WR	81	Jalen Virgil (So.)	3	Darrynton Evans (So.)
LT	**75**	**Victor Johnson (Jr.)**	56	Nate Haskins (So.)
LG	58	Ryan Neuzil (So.)	73	Cole Garrison (So.)
C	**60**	**Noah Hannon (So.)**	58	Ryan Neuzil (So.)
RG	52	Tobias Edge-Campbell (Sr.)	73	Cole Garrison (So.)
RT	55	Matt Williams (So.)	76	Madison Malone (Sr.)
TE	87	Collin Reed (Jr.)	95	Devin Papenheim (Jr.)
QB	12	Zac Thomas (So.)	7	Jacob Huesman (So.)
RB	**25**	**Jalin Moore (Sr.)**	26	Marcus Williams (So.)

DEFENSE (5)

DE	47	Okon Godwin (Sr.)	48	Demetrius Taylor (So.)
NT	**92**	**Myquon Stout (Sr.)**	96	Markell Clark (So.)
DE	90	Chris Willis (So.)	57	Elijah Diarrassouba (So.)
OLB	40	Tim Frizzell (So.)	53	Noel Cook (Jr.)
ILB	**44**	**Anthony Flory (Sr.)**	33	Edward Davis (Jr.)
ILB	59	Jordan Fehr (Jr.)	33	Edward Davis (Jr.)
OLB	24	Akeem Davis-Gaither (Jr.)	29	Devonte Harrison (So.)
CB	**17**	**Tae Hayes (Sr.)**	34	Shaun Jolly (Fr.)
CB	**4**	**Clifton Duck (Jr.)**	8	Shemar Jean-Charles (So.)
SS	**6**	**Desmond Franklin (Jr.)**	9	Austin Exford (Sr.)
FS	7	Josh Thomas (Sr.)	6	Desmond Franklin (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	91	Chandler Staton (So.)	**KR**	Dominique Heath (Sr.)
P	39	Xavier Subotsch (So.)	**PR**	Dominique Heath (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Zac Thomas, 10-6-33-0, 0 TDs
Rushing: Jalin Moore, 183 att., 1,037 yds., 12 TDs
Receiving: Thomas Hennigan, 45 rec., 585 yds., 7 TDs
Tackles: Anthony Flory, 87
Sacks: Demetrius Taylor, 3.0
Interceptions: Clifton Duck, 6

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Scott Satterfield
Record at School: 41-22 (5 years)
Career Record: 41-22 (5 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Shawn Clark, Frank Ponce
Defensive Coordinators: Bryan Brown, Dale Jones
Boone, NC • Kidd Brewer Stadium (23,150)

Chad Mitchell/App State Athletics

Coastal Carolina **Chanticleers**

National Forecast: **123** • Sun Belt East Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **3-9, 2-6 Sun Belt**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at South Carolina
Sept.	8	UAB
Sept.	15	Campbell
Sept.	22	at UL Lafayette
Sept.	29	at Troy
Oct.	13	UL Monroe
Oct.	20	at Massachusetts
Oct.	27	at Georgia State
Nov.	3	Appalachian State
Nov.	10	Arkansas State
Nov.	17	Georgia Southern
Nov.	24	at South Alabama

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 3-9, 2-6 SUN BELT

Sept.	2	Massachusetts	W	38-28
Sept.	16	at UAB	L	23-30
Sept.	23	Western Illinois	L	10-52
Sept.	30	at UL Monroe	L	43-51
Oct.	7	Georgia State	L	21-27
Oct.	14	at Arkansas State	L	17-51
Oct.	21	at Appalachian State	L	29-37
Oct.	28	Texas State	L	7-27
Nov.	4	at Arkansas	L	38-39
Nov.	11	Troy	L	17-42
Nov.	18	at Idaho	W	13-7
Dec.	2	Georgia Southern	W	28-17

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Cincir Evans, RB, Memphis, TN
2. Steven Peterson, WR, Kennesaw, GA
3. Jerrod Clark, TE, Dorchester, MA
4. Tyrese Johnson-Fisher, RB, Leicester, England
5. Patrick McSweeney, WR, Staten Island, NY
6. Jaivon Heiligh, WR, Venice, FL
7. Shaquor Newkirk, DE, Harrells, NC
8. Fred Payton, QB, Suwanee, GA
9. Jamar Darboe, ILB, Kingston, NC
10. Isaiah Likely, ATH, Everett, MA

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SBC	NATIONAL
Scoring	23.7 ppg	7	102
Rushing	156.3 ypg	5	76
Passing	189.1 ypg	11	95
Total	345.3 ypg	9	106
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	34.0 ppg	10	108
Rushing	169.5 ypg	9	69
Passing	241.3 ypg	6	90
Total	410.8 ypg	8	81
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
-7	-0.58	11	106

STAT CORNER

.167

CCU went 1-5 in games decided by one score in 2017, a win pct. of .167. They also went 1-5 in their last six such FCS games.

OFFENSE Coastal Carolina has been searching for a productive quarterback for the past two years. Due to of a combination of injuries and scheme changes, the Chanticleers used seven quarterbacks in 2016 and six in 2017, and they still don't appear to have settled on a starter as the '18 season approaches.

Senior Kilton Anderson, a former starter at Fresno State who finished the 2017 season as QB1 for Coastal, and incoming freshman Bryce Carpenter, who enrolled in January, worked with the first-team offense in the spring game.

Coastal boasts quality depth at running back with the return of Boston College transfer Marcus Outlow and sophomores Alex James and Jacqez Hairston. It adds sophomore Torrance Marable, who led the Big South in rushing with 1,038 rushing yards last season for Presbyterian, which is in the process of dropping scholarships.

The Chants return speedy receivers Ky'Jon Tyler and Malcolm Williams, as well as possession receiver Omar Black. Williams had 266 yards last year against ULM.

Coastal started the youngest and least experienced offensive line in the country by season's end and projects up to four sophomores to start in 2018.

DEFENSE New defensive coordinator Marvin Sanders, a former DC at North Carolina, will have to rework a unit that gave up 34.0 points per game last season and has only four returning starters.

Two of the returning starters are in the secondary — senior cornerback Anthony Chesley, who was second on the team in pass breakups in 2017 with eight, and senior safety Fitz Wattley, who led the Chants with three interceptions and was second on the team with 82 tackles. The other returning starters are sophomore linebacker Silas Kelly, third on the team with 75 total tackles, and senior defensive lineman Ja'ree Tolbert.

Without a projected starter weighing 300 pounds or more, the Chants will rely on quickness and technique along the defensive front. The linebacker corps of Kelly, senior James Heft and junior Laqavious Paul is talented if not overly experienced. The toughest graduate to replace will be inside linebacker Shane Johnson, who had 100 tackles in 2017.

The Chants struggled to produce turnovers last season, with just six fumble recoveries and five interceptions, and they recorded only 15 sacks. Sanders hopes to increase those numbers.

SPECIALISTS Senior Evan Rabon handles both placements and punts for the Chants. Nothing too unusual about that — except for the fact that he punts with his left foot and kicks with his right foot. He was 12-of-19 on field goal attempts last season and averaged a school-record 43.2 yards per punt.

FINAL ANALYSIS Coastal's greatest addition this year will likely be the return of head coach Joe Moglia, who missed the entire 2017 season while on a sabbatical to deal with medical condition. Moglia, the acting chairman of the board at TD Ameritrade who returned to coaching after more than two decades in the corporate world, won the 2015 Eddie Robinson FCS National Coach of the Year Award.

Coastal is in its third year of transitioning to the FBS and will be eligible for a bowl game for the first time. The Chants went 3–9 and 2–6 in their first season in the Sun Belt, winning their final two games to snap a program-record nine-game losing streak and take some momentum into the offseason. They look to improve their standing with Moglia back at the helm.



KILTON ANDERSON

"Their problem is defense. They couldn't slow anyone down and dictate the speed of the game. They're still adjusting to the league and recruiting to that level."

— An opposing Sun Belt assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	19	Ky'Jon Tyler (Jr.)	4	Omar Black (Sr.)	
WR	9	**Malcolm Williams (Sr.)**	83	Larry Collins Jr. (So.)	
LT	60	Steven Bedosky (So.)	70	Antwine Loper (Fr.)	
LG	74	**Jack Franklin (So.)**	65	Adam Lawhorn (Sr.)	
C	63	**Trey Carter (So.)**	51	Sam Thompson (So.)	
RG	76	**Brock Hoffman (So.)**	62	Sean Fitzgerald (Fr.)	
RT	75	**Ethan Howard (Jr.)**	56	Jack Flood (Sr.)	
TE		Isaiah Likely (Fr.)	47	Maxwell Kjosa (Jr.)	
QB	7	Kilton Anderson (Sr.)	12	Bryce Carpenter (Fr.)	
RB	22	Alex James (So.)	28	Jacqez Hairston (So.)	
RB	21	Marcus Outlow (Sr.)	30	Torrance Marable (So.)	

DEFENSE (4)

DE	94	Jeffrey Gunter (So.)		Jerrod Clark (Fr.)
DT	52	C.J. Brewer (So.)	90	Wallace Cowins (So.)
DT	93	**Ja'ree Tolbert (Sr.)**	92	Jalin Walker (So.)
DE	97	Tarron Jackson (So.)	67	Javon Reynolds (So.)
OLB	29	**Silas Kelly (So.)**	40	Michael Makins (Fr.)
ILB	49	James Heft (Sr.)	44	E.J. Porter (Fr.)
OLB	25	Laqavious Paul (Jr.)	45	Chris Evans (Fr.)
CB	17	**Anthony Chesley (Sr.)**	7	Mallory Claybourne (Sr.)
CB	14	Preston Carey (Jr.)	13	Chandler Kryst (Jr.)
S	26	Ryan Lee (So.)	35	Brayden Matts (Fr.)
S	20	**Fitz Wattley (Sr.)**	30	Jave Brown (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	35	Evan Rabon (Sr.)	KR	19	Ky'Jon Tyler (Jr.)
P	35	Evan Rabon (Sr.)	PR	9	Malcolm Williams (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Kilton Anderson, 170-100-1,440-5, 11 TDs
Rushing: Marcus Outlow, 61 att., 279 yds., 1 TD
Receiving: Malcolm Williams, 43 rec., 793 yds., 7 TDs
Tackles: Fitz Wattley, 82
Sacks: Tarron Jackson, 3.5
Interceptions: Fitz Wattley, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Joe Moglia
Record at School: 51-15 (5 years)
Career Record: 51-15 (5 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Jamey Chadwell
Defensive Coordinator: Marvin Sanders
Conway, SC • Brooks Stadium (15,000)

AP

Georgia Southern **Eagles**

National Forecast: **115** • Sun Belt East Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **4-8, 3-5 Sun Belt**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	South Carolina State
Sept.	8	Massachusetts
Sept.	15	at Clemson
Sept.	29	Arkansas State
Oct.	6	South Alabama
Oct.	11	at Texas State
Oct.	20	at New Mexico State
Oct.	25	Appalachian State
Nov.	3	at ULM
Nov.	10	Troy
Nov.	17	at Coastal Carolina
Nov.	24	at Georgia State

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 2-10, 2-6 SUN BELT

Sept.	2	at Auburn	L	7-41
Sept.	9	vs. New Hampshire #	L	12-22
Sept.	23	at Indiana	L	17-52
Oct.	4	Arkansas State	L	25-43
Oct.	14	New Mexico State	L	27-35
Oct.	21	at Massachusetts	L	20-55
Oct.	28	at Troy	L	16-38
Nov.	4	Georgia State	L	17-21
Nov.	9	at Appalachian St.	L	6-27
Nov.	18	South Alabama	W	52-0
Nov.	25	at Louisiana	W	34-24
Dec.	2	at Coastal Carolina	L	17-28

#Birmingham

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Quin Williams, OLB, Madison, GA
2. Brandon Cross, CB, Orlando, FL
3. Justin Birdsong, CB, Lithonia, GA
4. Andrew Cunningham, RB, Tampa, FL
5. Scoobie Ford, WR, Atlanta, GA
6. Davarius Bargnare, WR, Orlando, FL
7. Parker Devine, DE, Jacksonville, FL
8. Elijah Campbell, DT, Gadsden, AL
9. Aaron Dowdell, OG, Fairburn, GA*
10. Jontavious Ferguson, ILB, Manchester, GA

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SBC	NATIONAL
Scoring	20.8 ppg	9	113
Rushing	222.3 ypg	2	24
Passing	110.0 ypg	12	127
Total	332.3 ypg	12	114
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	32.2 ppg	8	98
Rushing	180.3 ypg	10	83
Passing	230.1 ypg	3	73
Total	410.4 ypg	7	80
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
0	0.00	5	64

STAT CORNER

-147.5

GSU averaged 371.1 rushing yards per game in 2014-15 and ranked first in FBS both years. The last two years: 223.6, a 147.5-yard decrease.

OFFENSE The top priority for first-year head coach Chad Lunsford is reviving Georgia Southern's identity as a dominant triple-option offense. To do that, he's bringing back the shotgun-based scheme Willie Fritz employed with great success in 2014 and 2015 and has turned over the offense to Bob DeBesse, who was with Fritz at Sam Houston State and more recently engineered New Mexico's offensive revival.

"We needed to get back to the root of what has been successful here," says Lunsford, who was an assistant at Georgia Southern under four different head coaches.

Though the scheme change should help, there's plenty of work to do for a unit that averaged a pedestrian 20.8 points and 332.3 yards per game. Sophomore Shai Werts should take full command at quarterback after running for 722 yards and throwing seven touchdowns last season, but Lunsford is looking for improvement in Werts' technique after he relied on instinct and talent in his first year as a starter.

Running the ball will be a priority, and Lunsford saw growth in the offensive line in the spring, particularly inside where senior Curtis Rainey and junior college transfer Jawaski Webb will provide the foundation.

The Eagles are counting on another big year out of senior Wesley Fields, who led the team with 811 rushing yards last season and will look for ways to get the ball to tight end/H-back Ellis Richardson, whose playmaking presence might lift a receiving corps that otherwise lacks a standout.

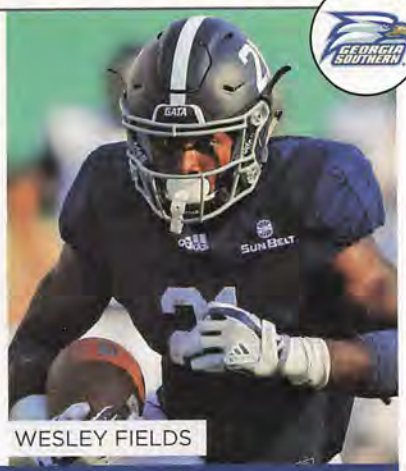
DEFENSE There could be some rocky moments in Lunsford's first year as the Eagles switch from the 4-3 to 3-4 scheme and will do so without an overwhelming amount of linebacker talent. They should be solid on the inside with Tomarcio Reese and Todd Bradley returning, but filling those outside roles will be an ongoing question mark.

The Eagles should continue to be among the Sun Belt's best against the pass (230.1 ypg last season) with arguably the league's top corner duo in juniors Monquavion Brinson and Kindle Vildor, who combined for eight interceptions last season. Safeties RJ Murray and Joshua Moon have played a lot of snaps as well and are versatile enough to move around and give offenses some unique looks.

Up front, coordinator Scot Sloan has three starters back but inherits a pressing concern with depth. Players such as senior Ian Bush, who flashed this spring, need to step up.

SPECIALISTS Junior kicker Tyler Bass turned into a legitimate weapon by the end of his sophomore season, making 12 of his final 13 attempts including a perfect 8-for-8 from beyond 40 yards. Bass could end up punting as well if none of the walk-ons pan out. Sophomore slot receiver Wesley Kennedy, who got a bit of experience last season, could provide more pop in the return game.

FINAL ANALYSIS Players responded well to Lunsford as interim in the second half of last season, but filling some roster holes and implementing scheme changes give him a heavy lift in Year 1. Regardless, the atmosphere is far better now than it was during Tyson Summers' failed 18-game stint, as Lunsford understands the pressures and expectations of being at Georgia Southern. "One of the biggest changes I wanted my staff and us to do is make sure football was fun again and still be able to hold them accountable," he says. "I think we've accomplished that."



WESLEY FIELDS

"They always have talent and can always recruit to fit their scheme. It wasn't the players or the option. They had a culture issue."

— An opposing Sun Belt assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	**23**	**Mark Michaud (Jr.)**	81	Darion Anderson (So.)
WR	11	Malik Henry (Sr.)	19	D'Ondre Glenn (Jr.)
SLOT	12	Wesley Kennedy (So.)	33	Malik Murray (So.)
LT	56	Brian Miller (Fr.)	70	Jarrod Leeds (Fr.)
LG	**62**	**Ryan Northrup (Sr.)**	58	Jeremiah Culbreth (Sr.)
C	**75**	**Curtis Rainey (Sr.)**	50	Caleb Kelly (So.)
RG	55	Jawaski Webb (So.)	66	Jake Edwards (Jr.)
RT	**61**	**Drew Wilson (Jr.)**	57	Parker Williams (Jr.)
TE	5	Ellis Richardson (Sr.)	80	D.J. Butler (Fr.)
QB	**4**	**Shai Werts (So.)**	13	Kado Brown (Sr.)
RB	**21**	**Wesley Fields (Sr.)**	36	Matt LaRoche (Fr.)

DEFENSE (9)

DE	**41**	**Deshon Cooper (Sr.)**	95	Ian Bush (Sr.)
NT	96	Ty Phillips (Jr.)	52	Quan Griffin (So.)
DE	**92**	**Raymond Johnson (So.)**	**91**	**Logan Hunt (Sr.)**
OLB	47	Randy Wade (So.)	93	Demetrice Lofton (So.)
ILB	**33**	**Tomarcio Reese (Sr.)**	37	Lane Ecton (Jr.)
ILB	11	Todd Bradley (So.)	32	Chris Harris (So.)
OLB	26	Jay Bowdry (Jr.)	54	Benz Josue (Fr.)
CB	**4**	**Monquavion Brinson (Jr.)**	13	Christian Matthew (Jr.)
CB	20	Kindle Vildor (Jr.)	31	Darrell Baker Jr. (So.)
SS	**2**	**RJ Murray (Sr.)**	**30**	**Jessie Liptrot (Jr.)**
FS	**22**	**Joshua Moon (Sr.)**	**24**	**Sean Freeman (Sr.)**

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	16	Tyler Bass (Jr.)	**KR**	12	Wesley Kennedy (So.)
P	16	Tyler Bass (Jr.)	**PR**	12	Wesley Kennedy (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Shai Werts, 152-85-929-5, 7 TDs
Rushing: Wesley Fields, 173 att., 811 yds., 5 TDs
Receiving: Malik Henry, 20 rec., 268 yds., 1 TD
Tackles: RJ Murray, 60
Sacks: Logan Hunt, 5.0
Interceptions: Monquavion Brinson, 5

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Chad Lunsford
Record at School: 2-4 (interim head coach)
Career Record: 2-4 (interim head coach)
Offensive Coordinator: Bob DeBesse
Defensive Coordinator: Scot Sloan
Statesboro, GA • Paulson Stadium (25,000)

Georgia Southern Athletics

Georgia State **Panthers**

National Forecast: **113** • Sun Belt East Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **5-7, 4-4 Sun Belt**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug.	30	Kennesaw State
Sept.	8	at NC State
Sept.	14	at Memphis
Sept.	22	Western Michigan
Sept.	29	ULM
Oct.	4	at Troy
Oct.	18	at Arkansas State
Oct.	27	Coastal Carolina
Nov.	3	Texas State
Nov.	10	at Louisiana
Nov.	17	at Appalachian State
Nov.	24	Georgia Southern

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-5, 5-3 SUN BELT

Aug.	31	Tennessee State	L	10-17
Sept.	16	at Penn State	L	0-56
Sept.	23	at Charlotte	W	28-0
Oct.	7	at Coastal Carolina	W	27-21
Oct.	14	at ULM	W	47-37
Oct.	21	Troy	L	10-34
Oct.	26	South Alabama	W	21-13
Nov.	4	at Georgia Southern	W	21-17
Nov.	11	at Texas State	W	33-30
Nov.	25	Appalachian State	L	10-31
Dec.	2	Idaho	L	10-24
Dec.	16	vs. WKU #	W	27-17

#Cure Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Destin Coates, RB, Tallahassee, FL
2. Swift Lyle, QB, Mobile, AL
3. Sam Pinckney, WR, Greenwood, SC
4. Akeem Smith, DT, Virginia Beach, VA
5. Courtney Williams, S, Hogansville, GA
6. Blake Carroll, ILB, Lawrenceville, GA
7. Cornelius McCoy, WR, Deerfield Beach, FL
8. Quavian White, CB, Greer, SC
9. Despelado Alexandre, OT, Deerfield Beach, FL
10. Dan Ellington, QB, Olive Branch, MS*

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SBC	NATIONAL
Scoring	20.3 ppg	10	117
Rushing	117.3 ypg	10	114
Passing	270.7 ypg	4	31
Total	388.0 ypg	7	81
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	24.8 ppg	3	48
Rushing	136.4 ypg	3	34
Passing	251.4 ypg	8	102
Total	387.8 ypg	4	61
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
-4	-0.33	9	93

STAT CORNER

31.2

GSU gained 5.0 or more yards on only 31.2% of its non-sack carries, second worst in FBS and ahead of only Kansas.

OFFENSE As Shawn Elliott infuses more of his identity in Year 2, Georgia State will gear its offense toward a dual-threat quarterback. That wasn't possible last season with honorable mention all-conference passer Conner Manning, who threw for 3,146 yards. But his departure gives offensive coordinator Travis Trickett a clean slate to find somebody who can grow into a system that will use plenty of spread concepts.

Who that will be remains a question, as Elliott doesn't plan on naming a starter right away. Junior college All-American Dan Ellington comes with plenty of buzz, but Aaron Winchester has some experience as a backup, and Jack Walker ran the scout team last year as a redshirt.

"It'll work itself out," Elliott says.

The next quarterback will have the luxury of a deep receiving corps led by 5'8" junior Penny Hart, one of the Sun Belt's top playmakers with 2,281 career receiving yards, and an impact transfer from South Carolina in 6'4" Christian Owens, whose physicality on the perimeter will bring a different element to the run game.

An infusion of talent up front should pay dividends. Elliott inherited just seven offensive linemen, and the Panthers had to get creative last season in moving around personnel to fill holes while three of his recruits redshirted. This year, Georgia State should rotate 9-10 linemen with four starters returning, turning a weakness into a potential strength.

DEFENSE Though the Panthers were among the top four defenses in the league last season, allowing a respectable 24.8 points per game, their lack of athleticism on the back end was often exposed against good passers and receiving corps. That's why Elliott is excited to promote a new, younger group of defensive backs to bolster what should be a strong front that held teams to an average of 136.4 rushing yards last year.

"We're going to put guys back there that can cover the ground from hash to sideline very easily," Elliott says of a group that includes exciting freshmen Chris Bacon, Jaylon Jones and Jacorey Crawford at safety and Tyler Gore at corner.

Georgia State will also have to rely on youngsters at linebacker to build around solid seniors Chase Middleton and Michael Shaw, with Victor Heyward and Trajan Stephens-McQueen emerging last season as true freshmen.

Nose guard Dontae Wilson looks like a potential All-Sun Belt player. He recorded four sacks and 24 tackles in 2017 and should be the anchor in Georgia State's 3-4 scheme for the next few years.

SPECIALISTS Placekicker Brandon Wright, who also shared punting duties last season, had a strong finish to the season, going 8-of-10 over the final four games. One of Georgia State's big goals for 2018 is finding ways for Hart, a dynamic and shifty playmaker, to make an impact in the punt return game, as the team averaged just 6.4 yards per return.

FINAL ANALYSIS Elliott pushed his team physically last season, trying to build a culture of toughness while getting them to believe they could win. All things considered, going 7–5 with a bowl win over Western Kentucky was a better-than-expected debut for Elliott, who still needs another couple years of recruiting to get the roster up to par. Though a tougher schedule and a younger team may function as speed bumps in 2018, Elliott is well on his way to building one of the more solid programs in the Sun Belt.



PENNY HART

"They're starting to get players in the Atlanta area and recruit to an identity. I think they're on the rise as a program, but they're losing a lot of key guys."

— An opposing Sun Belt assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)				
WR	**18**	**Penny Hart (Jr.)**	87	Camryn Johnson (Fr.)
WR	**81**	**Tamir Jones (So.)**	6	Jonathan Ifedi (So.)
WR	85	Christian Owens (Jr.)	14	Devin Gentry (Jr.)
LT	**76**	**Hunter Atkinson (Jr.)**	74	Despelado Alexandre (Fr.)
LG	**75**	**Shamarious Gilmore (So.)**	65	Jalen Jackson (Fr.)
C	**50**	**Jamal Paxton (Sr.)**	62	Malik Sumter (Fr.)
RG	**72**	**Gabe Mobley (Sr.)**	64	Pat Bartlett (So.)
RT	78	Kevin Kwapis (Jr.)	69	Lucas Johnson (Sr.)
TE	45	Roger Carter (So.)	12	Emiere Scaife (Sr.)
QB	13	Dan Ellington (Jr.)	11	Aaron Winchester (Jr.)
RB	5	Tra Barnett (Jr.)	38	Demarcus Kirk (Sr.)
DEFENSE (5)				
DE	**95**	**Marterious Allen (Sr.)**	90	Hardrick Willis (So.)
NG	52	Dontae Wilson (So.)	61	Steven Banks (Fr.)
DE	**55**	**Terry Thomas (Jr.)**	30	Javonte Lain (So.)
OLB	**44**	**Michael Shaw (Sr.)**	26	Kendrec Grady (So)
ILB	2	Ed Curney (Jr.)	53	Jalen Wade (Sr.)
ILB	**39**	**Chase Middleton (Sr.)**	51	Trajan Stephens-McQueen (So.)
OLB	37	Victor Heyward (So.)	47	Jhi'Shawn Taylor (Fr.)
CB	**16**	**Jerome Smith (Sr.)**	19	Kerryon Richardson (Fr.)
CB	9	Cedric Stone (Jr.)	5	Tyler Gore (Fr.)
SS	40	Remy Lazarus (Jr.)	3	Chris Bacon (Fr.)
FS	24	DeAndre Applin (Sr.)	27	Jaylon Jones (Fr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	93	Brandon Wright (Jr.)	**KR**	18 Penny Hart (Jr.)
P	48	Oliver Holdenson (Jr.)	**PR**	18 Penny Hart (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Aaron Winchester, 9-6-102-1, 1 TD
Rushing: Taz Bateman, 53 att., 176 yds., 0 TDs
Receiving: Penny Hart, 74 rec., 1,121 yds., 8 TDs
Tackles: Chase Middleton, 65
Sacks: Marterious Allen, 4.0; Dontae Wilson, 4.0
Interceptions: Four players tied with 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Shawn Elliott
Record at School: 7-5 (1 year)
Career Record: 8-10 (1+ year)
Offensive Coordinator: Travis Trickett
Defensive Coordinator: Nate Fuqua
Atlanta, GA • Georgia State Stadium (25,000)

Ben Ennis/Georgia State Athletics

Troy **Trojans**

National Forecast: **76** • Sun Belt East Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **8-5, 6-2 Sun Belt**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Boise State
Sept.	8	Florida A&M
Sept.	15	at Nebraska
Sept.	22	at UL Monroe
Sept.	29	Coastal Carolina
Oct.	4	Georgia State
Oct.	13	at Liberty
Oct.	23	at South Alabama
Nov.	3	Louisiana
Nov.	10	at Georgia Southern
Nov.	17	Texas State
Nov.	24	at Appalachian State

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 11-2, 7-1 SUN BELT

Sept.	2	at Boise State	L	13-24
Sept.	9	Alabama State	W	34-7
Sept.	16	at New Mexico State	W	27-24
Sept.	23	Akron	W	22-17
Sept.	30	at LSU	W	24-21
Oct.	11	South Alabama	L	8-19
Oct.	21	at Georgia State	W	34-10
Oct.	28	Georgia Southern	W	38-16
Nov.	2	Idaho	W	24-21
Nov.	11	at Coastal Carolina	W	42-17
Nov.	24	Texas State	W	62-9
Dec.	2	at Arkansas State	W	32-25
Dec.	16	vs. North Texas #	W	50-30

#New Orleans Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Demontrez Brown, WR, Madison, AL
2. Jake Andrews, OT, Millbrook, AL
3. K.J. Robertson, OLB, Alabaster, AL
4. Will Choloh, DT, Lawrenceville, GA
5. Gunnar Watson, QB, Butler, GA
6. A.J. Lewis Jr., TE, Mobile, AL
7. Levon Fletcher, CB, Huntsville, AL
8. Antonio Showers, OLB, Tucker, GA
9. A.J. Pierce Jr., DT, Dothan AL
10. Kevin Perkins, RB, Tunica, MS*

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SBC	NATIONAL
Scoring	31.5 ppg	4	43
Rushing	149.0 ypg	7	85
Passing	269.6 ypg	5	33
Total	418.6 ypg	5	46
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	18.5 ppg	1	11
Rushing	105.7 ypg	1	7
Passing	231.3 ypg	4	75
Total	337.0 ypg	1	24
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
+7	+0.54	2	26

STAT CORNER

3.13

Troy's defense stiffened as well as anyone's: Opponents averaged just 3.13 points per trip inside the Trojans' 40, lowest in FBS.

OFFENSE There's a bright neon "VACANCY" sign at quarterback, where four-year starter Brandon Silvers is gone after overseeing a 21–5 run over the past two seasons. The top candidates to replace him are junior Kaleb Barker and sophomore Sawyer Smith, neither of whom has seen significant time in his first two years on campus nor appeared to distinguish himself as the clear frontrunner in spring practice. Three-star freshman Gunnar Watson joins the mix this summer with a chance to make an immediate mark.

The rest of the skill positions will be in more familiar hands, especially receiver, where returning starters Deondre Douglas, Damion Willis and Sam Letton will be joined by Louisville transfer Traveon Samuel, a frequent target the past three seasons for Lamar Jackson. The ground game is less certain with the departure of Troy's all-time touchdown leader, Jordan Chunn, who led the team in rushing two of the past four years. But between Jamarius Henderson, B.J. Smith, Jabir Daughtry-Frye and jumbo-sized junior college signee Kevin Perkins, there's no shortage of viable options to pick up the slack, and whoever emerges from the pack will be running behind four returning starters on an offensive line with a combined 72 career starts.

DEFENSE The Trojans led the SBC in both total and scoring defense in 2017 and led the nation in red zone defense. They also said goodbye to six full-time starters from that unit, leaving coordinator Vic Koenning with as many question marks as answers in his bid to uphold those standards.

The good news is that the returnees are all among the Sun Belt's best: Edge rusher Hunter Reese and cornerback Blace Brown — both former walk-ons — were first-team all-conference picks as first-year starters; nose tackle Trevon Sanders and linebacker Tron Folsom joined them on the second team. Senior safety Cedarius Rookard is the veteran of the group with 28 career starts. And even among the projected new starters, the only one who didn't see relevant action last season is safety Will Sunderland, who began his career as a blue-chip recruit at Oklahoma.

SPECIALISTS There's an embarrassment of riches in the return game, headlined by sophomore Marcus Jones, who returned three kickoffs for TDs as a true freshman. But he'll have to hold off Daughtry-Frye, who finished No. 11 nationally in kick return average in 2016 before missing all of last year with an injury, and Samuel, who returned kicks for Louisville. Punter Tyler Sumpter took over placekicking duties midway through last season, finishing 7-for-9 on field goals, although he didn't attempt a kick from beyond 40 yards.

FINAL ANALYSIS Troy came up just short of a breakthrough in 2016, narrowly missing out on both a major upset (at Clemson) and a conference title. In 2017, it made good on both of those promises, pulling off a midseason stunner at LSU and finishing atop the Sun Belt standings en route to a school record for wins as an FBS program. Instead of heading for greener pastures, Neal Brown is still in charge, and despite some notable attrition, the roster is hardly in rebuilding mode.

The schedule opens with two non-conference heavies in the first month, Boise State and Nebraska, and ends with a trip to fellow SBC East favorite Appalachian State. In between, though, the Trojans will likely be favored in every game, putting a third consecutive 10-win season very much within reach.



HUNTER REESE

"One of the best programs in our conference, a model for consistency and culture. They're going to be a top program in the league as long as that staff is there."

— An opposing Sun Belt assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)					
WR	**80**	**Deondre Douglas (Sr.)**	13	Tray Eafford (So.)	
WR	**15**	**Damion Willis (Sr.)**		Demontrez Brown (Fr.)	
WR		Traveon Samuel (Sr.)	6	Sidney Davis (Sr.)	
WR	**17**	**Sam Letton (Jr.)**	10	Richard Hallman (Jr.)	
LT	**69**	**J.L. Gaston (Jr.)**	79	Austin Stidham (Fr.)	
LG	**78**	**Kirk Kelley (Jr.)**	70	Zach Branner (Jr.)	
C	**57**	**Deontae Crumitie (Sr.)**	65	Dylan Bradshaw (So.)	
RG	**54**	**Tristan Crowder (Jr.)**	77	Travius Harris (Fr.)	
RT	75	James Peach (Jr.)		Jake Andrews (Fr.)	
QB	7	Kaleb Barker (Jr.)	3	Sawyer Smith (So.)	
RB	9	Jamarius Henderson (Jr.)	26	B.J. Smith (Jr.)	
DEFENSE (6)					
DE	48	Marcus Webb (Jr.)	52	Rasool Clemons (Jr.)	
NT	**90**	**Trevon Sanders (Sr.)**	40	Antione Barker (Jr.)	
DE	91	Kelvin Lucky (So.)	58	Travon Mathis (Fr.)	
OLB	**47**	**Hunter Reese (Sr.)**	**50**	**Zo Bridges (Jr.)**	
LB	**29**	**Tron Folsom (Jr.)**	31	A.J. Smiley (Jr.)	
LB	25	Justin Whisenhunt (So.)	21	Kevin Nixon (So.)	
CB	**18**	**Blace Brown (Sr.)**	27	Jawon McDowell (Jr.)	
CB	8	Marcus Jones (So.)	14	Terence Dunlap (So.)	
NB		Will Sunderland (Jr.)	35	Tyler Murray (So.)	
FS	**24**	**Cedarius Rookard (Sr.)**	19	Adarius Wesley (Jr.)	
SS	12	Melvin Tyus (Jr.)	22	Kyle Nixon (So.)	
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K	98	Tyler Sumpter (So.)	**KR**	5	Jabir Daughtry-Frye (So.)
P	98	Tyler Sumpter (So.)	**PR**	8	Marcus Jones (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Kaleb Barker, 13-8-143-0, 1 TD
Rushing: Jamarius Henderson, 45 att., 355 yds., 4 TDs
Receiving: Deondre Douglas, 48 rec., 628 yds., 4 TDs
Tackles: Tron Folsom, 80
Sacks: Hunter Reese, 6.5
Interceptions: Blace Brown, 5

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Neal Brown
Record at School: 25–13 (3 years)
Career Record: 25–13 (3 years)
Offensive Coordinators: Matt Moore, Sean Reagan
Defensive Coordinator: Vic Koenning
Troy, AL • Veterans Memorial Stadium (30,000)

Colin Edwards/Troy

Arkansas State **Red Wolves**

National Forecast: **72** • Sun Belt West Prediction: **1** • Projected Record: **9-4, 6-2 Sun Belt**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	SE Missouri
Sept.	8	at Alabama
Sept.	15	at Tulsa
Sept.	22	UNLV
Sept.	29	at Georgia Southern
Oct.	9	Appalachian State
Oct.	18	Georgia State
Oct.	27	at Louisiana
Nov.	3	South Alabama
Nov.	10	at Coastal Carolina
Nov.	17	UL Monroe
Nov.	24	at Texas State

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-5, 6-2 SUN BELT

Sept.	2	at Nebraska	L	36-43
Sept.	16	Arkansas-Pine Bluff	W	48-3
Sept.	23	at SMU	L	21-44
Oct.	4	at Georgia Southern	W	43-25
Oct.	14	Coastal Carolina	W	51-17
Oct.	19	Louisiana	W	47-3
Oct.	28	at New Mexico State	W	37-21
Nov.	11	at South Alabama	L	19-24
Nov.	18	Texas State	W	30-12
Nov.	25	at UL Monroe	W	67-50
Dec.	2	Troy	L	25-32
Dec.	16	vs. Middle Tennessee #	L	30-35

#Camellia Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Kirk Merritt, WR, Destrehan, LA*
2. Nathan Page, CB, Roland, AR
3. Jax Gasaway, OT, Star City, AR
4. Jevon Jones, CB, Allen, TX
5. Donovan Marshall, RB, Saint Louis, MO
6. Terry Hampton, DT, El Dorado, AR
7. Antonio Fletcher, S, Lithonia, GA
8. Jaden Harris, S, Monroe, LA
9. Layne Hatcher, QB, Little Rock, AR
10. Detravion Green, RB, Ashdown, AR

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SBC	NATIONAL
Scoring	37.8 ppg	1	12
Rushing	152.6 ypg	6	80
Passing	342.2 ypg	1	5
Total	494.8 ypg	1	10
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	25.8 ppg	4	56
Rushing	136.1 ypg	2	32
Passing	241.4 ypg	7	91
Total	377.5 ypg	3	54
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
-1	-0.08	6	72

STAT CORNER

+7.1

Arkansas State's field position margin of plus-7.1 yards per possession was sixth in FBS and easily tops in the Sun Belt.

OFFENSE Arkansas State featured the Sun Belt's most prolific passing attack in 2017 as coach Blake Anderson took over play-calling duties. The Red Wolves led the league (and ranked fifth in FBS) by throwing for 342.2 yards per game in a fast-paced system. Supported by an imposing receiving corps, quarterback Justice Hansen is poised for another banner season. Hansen passed for 3,967 yards and 37 touchdowns last year, easily setting school records, and the 6'4" senior is also capable of making plays on scrambles or designed runs.

Hansen's go-to receiver late last season was 6'6" senior Justin McInnis, who caught 22 passes for 409 yards in the final three games. Omar Bayless, a 6'3" junior who caught six TD passes, has a knack for making difficult plays. Other tall targets include 6'5" senior Kendrick Edwards and 6'4" Oklahoma transfer Dahu Green, described by Anderson as "an NFL-caliber player."

The backfield features 5'5" senior Warren Wand, a solid running back who contributed 860 all-purpose yards in 10 games. Armond Weh-Weh, a 214-pound senior who was given an additional season because of injuries, could provide a bigger option in the backfield.

While the Red Wolves led the Sun Belt in scoring and often moved the ball easily between the 20s, their offense was among the nation's least efficient in the red zone. ASU struggled to gain yardage in obvious running situations, an issue Anderson hopes to correct with four starters returning on the offensive line, including All-Sun Belt tackle Lanard Bonner.

DEFENSE The Red Wolves suffered key losses at each level of their defense after ranking third in the Sun Belt in yards allowed and fourth in scoring defense. The departures include Ja'Von Rolland-Jones, who finished his career second among FBS players in total sacks.

Ironically, other vacancies might prove harder to fill than the hole Rolland-Jones left at end. Senior Ronheen Bingham, who ran the 40-yard dash in 4.5 seconds in the spring, had five sacks to earn second-team All-SBC honors in a part-time role last season. The Red Wolves remain deep at end and are counting on Ball State transfer Kevin Thurmon to be disruptive at tackle. Senior Christian Howard, a key contributor last season at tackle, moved to end in the spring.

The answers aren't as obvious at linebacker. Tajhea Chambers is in line for a key role, but the Red Wolves figure to try several combinations. Four different players started last season at outside linebacker, a position eventually held by converted safety Darreon Jackson.

ASU features one of the Sun Belt's best defensive backs in senior nickel safety Justin Clifton, and junior strong safety B.J. Edmonds made huge strides last fall. The Red Wolves are lacking experience at cornerback, however, after losing three seniors who started every game in 2017.

SPECIALISTS ASU has a gifted punter in Cody Grace, who averaged 41.1 yards and had only four punts returned out of 49 last season. Placekicker Sawyer Williams was 16-of-22 on field goals, though just 4-of-9 from 30-39 yards.

FINAL ANALYSIS Anderson placed an offseason emphasis on accountability after the Red Wolves watched a Sun Belt title and a bowl victory slip away last season despite an offense that set five school records. The Red Wolves could be even more explosive in Hansen's final season at quarterback. If they plug a few holes on defense and clean up some of the miscues, their chances of reaching the Sun Belt title game are strong.



JUSTICE HANSEN

"They've got a lot of guys back, which makes them the scariest team in the Sun Belt. Their receivers could start in any league. They are that good."

— An opposing Sun Belt assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	4	Dahu Green (Jr.)	7	Omar Bayless (Jr.)	
WR	18	**Justin McInnis (Sr.)**	5	Kendrick Edwards (Sr.)	
WR		Kirk Merritt (Jr.)	17	Darveon Brown (Jr.)	
TE	81	Javonis Isaac (So.)		Ross Painter (Jr.)	
LT	70	**Lanard Bonner (Sr.)**	73	Cam Davis (Jr.)	
LG	77	Jacob Atnip (So.)	92	Andre Harris (Fr.)	
C	64	**Jacob Still (So.)**	75	**Dalton Ford (Jr.)**	
RG	69	Marvis Brown (Sr.)	71	Klint Harvey (Jr.)	
RT	76	Nour-Eddine Seidnaly (Jr.)	67	**Troy Elliott (Jr.)**	
QB	15	**Justice Hansen (Sr.)**	12	Logan Bonner (So.)	
RB	6	**Warren Wand (Sr.)**	2	Armond Weh-Weh (Sr.)	

DEFENSE (4)

DE	23	Ronheen Bingham (Sr.)	39	Dajon Emory (Sr.)	
NT	94	**Hunter Moreton (So.)**	99	Tony Adams (Sr.)	
DT	97	Kevin Thurmon (Jr.)	91	Donovan Ransom (Sr.)	
DE	50	William Bradley-King (So.)	93	Christian Howard (Sr.)	
LB	32	Tajhea Chambers (So.)	51	Kirk Louis (Jr.)	
LB	22	Caleb Bonner (So.)	26	Trent Ellis-Brewer (Jr.)	
NS	10	**Justin Clifton (Sr.)**	45	Logan Wescott (Jr.)	
CB	28	Brandon Byner (Sr.)		Jevon Jones (Fr.)	
CB	24	Jeremy Smith (Jr.)		Triston Anderson (Fr.)	
SS	3	**B.J. Edmonds (Jr.)**	27	Demari Medley (So.)	
FS	34	Darreon Jackson (Jr.)	4	**Michael Johnson (Sr.)**	

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	38	Sawyer Williams (Jr.)	KR	6	Warren Wand (Sr.)
P	41	Cody Grace (Jr.)	PR		Kirk Merritt (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Justice Hansen, 487-305-3,967-16, 37 TDs
Rushing: Warren Wand, 138 att., 715 yds., 6 TDs
Receiving: Justin McInnis, 49 rec., 800 yds., 4 TDs
Tackles: B.J. Edmonds, 80
Sacks: Ronheen Bingham, 5.0
Interceptions: B.J. Edmonds, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Blake Anderson
Record at School: 31-20 (4 years)
Career Record: 31-20 (4 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Buster Faulkner
Defensive Coordinator: Joe Cauthen
Jonesboro, AR • Centennial Bank Stadium (30,382)

Photo by Justin Manning

Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns

National Forecast: **110** • Sun Belt West Prediction: **3** • Projected Record: **6-6, 4-4 Sun Belt**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Grambling
Sept.	15	at Mississippi State
Sept.	22	Coastal Carolina
Sept.	29	at Alabama
Oct.	6	at Texas State
Oct.	13	New Mexico State
Oct.	20	at Appalachian State
Oct.	27	Arkansas State
Nov.	3	at Troy
Nov.	10	Georgia State
Nov.	17	South Alabama
Nov.	24	at UL Monroe

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 5-7, 4-4 SUN BELT

Sept.	2	SE Louisiana	W	51-48
Sept.	9	at Tulsa	L	42-66
Sept.	16	at Texas A&M	L	21-45
Sept.	23	UL Monroe (ot)	L	50-56
Oct.	7	at Idaho	W	21-16
Oct.	12	Texas State	W	24-7
Oct.	19	at Arkansas State	L	3-47
Nov.	4	at South Alabama	W	19-14
Nov.	11	at Ole Miss	L	22-50
Nov.	18	New Mexico State	W	47-34
Nov.	25	Georgia Southern	L	24-34
Dec.	2	at Appalachian State	L	14-63

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Timaje Porter, DT, Grand Bay, AL
2. Chauncey Manac, DL, Homerville, GA*
3. Chris Smith, RB, Louisville, MS
4. Max Yarbrough, OG, Friendswood, TX
5. Percy Butler, CB, Plaquemine, LA
6. Lorenzo McCaskill, OLB, Detroit, MI*
7. Johnny Lumpkin, TE, Atlanta, GA*
8. Asjlin Washington, CB, Houston, TX
9. Luke Junkunc, OT, Houston, TX
10. Jordan Cordova, OLB, Kinder, LA

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SBC	NATIONAL
Scoring	28.2 ppg	6	66
Rushing	183.7 ypg	3	43
Passing	214.8 ypg	9	78
Total	398.5 ypg	6	65
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	40.0 ppg	11	124
Rushing	236.6 ypg	12	122
Passing	256.1 ypg	9	108
Total	492.7 ypg	11	124
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
-1	-0.08	6	72

STAT CORNER

12.5

UL's havoc rate (combined TFLs, forced fumbles and passes defensed divided by total defensive plays) was 12.5%, 116th in FBS.

OFFENSE Quarterback was a revolving door for Louisiana in 2017. The nominal starter, Jordan Davis, went down at midseason with a knee injury. His backup, junior college transfer Andre Nunez, lasted two weeks before his season was cut short by a concussion. In November, coaches pulled the redshirt off true freshman Levi Lewis, who was subsequently limited by a sprained ankle and ended the year on a time share with a less-than-100-percent Davis. Collectively, the Cajuns finished in the bottom half of the Sun Belt in pass efficiency for the fourth year in a row, and head coach Mark Hudspeth was fired.

With all three QBs back in good health and no true incumbent, new coach Billy Napier declared a "clean slate" in the spring and is in no hurry to resolve the question. Davis, a fifth-year senior, is the most experienced; Lewis is the most athletic. But regardless of who emerges behind center, the rest of the offense returns largely intact: Virtually everyone who touched the ball in 2017 is back, including the leading rusher (Trey Ragas) and all six regulars at wide receiver.

However the line shakes out, all five starters up front will likely be redshirt juniors or seniors who've been playing together for several years. They'll also tip the scales on average at close to 310 pounds per man.

DEFENSE The defense was an outright disaster, yielding 40 points and just shy of 500 yards per game — and it was the primary reason Hudspeth and his staff were shown the door. So the fact that most of the starting lineup from that unit has also moved on is not necessarily a negative.

The most familiar face for Cajuns fans is junior Joe Dillon, who looked like a rising star in 2016 but saw his productivity dip last year as he shuffled between defensive end and a more conventional linebacker role. This year he's expected to be back on the edge full-time, where he's most comfortable.

The Cajuns need immediate help from two graduate transfers — defensive tackle Garrald McDowell from Ole Miss and cornerback Kendall Johnson from Nevada. A Louisiana native, Johnson started 26 games for the Wolf Pack before returning to his home state.

SPECIALISTS Placekicker Stevie Artigue flashed a big leg in 2017, connecting on a pair of 50-yard field goals, but was less reliable from shorter distances (10-of-14). With more consistency, he has all-conference potential. Ditto for return man Raymond Calais, who took two kickoffs to the house in a season-opening win over Southeastern Louisiana but failed to break another big gainer the rest of the year.

FINAL ANALYSIS Hudspeth's first four seasons in Lafayette yielded identical 9–4 records and four consecutive wins in the New Orleans Bowl, which stands as the best run in school history. But it also raised expectations that he was unable to meet the past three years, each of which ended with a losing record. The mandate for Napier, a 38-year-old offensive guru with stints at Clemson, Alabama and Arizona State, is to get the Cajuns back in the black and keep them there.

That will take time, especially given that he inherited a roster with far fewer than the 85 scholarships players allowed by the NCAA. The incoming recruiting class has just 15 players, including three junior college signees with limited eligibility. Even with a relatively veteran lineup, Napier's debut has the makings of a classic rebuilding year. If the end result exceeds last year's 5–7 mark, that will be a promising first step.



TREY RAGAS

"Every year they look like an SEC team when they get off the bus. They're long, athletic and they have size that you can't normally find in our conference."

— An opposing Sun Belt assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)

WR	**21**	**Keenan Barnes (Sr.)**	20	Jarrod Jackson (Jr.)
WR	**17**	**Ja'Marcus Bradley (Jr.)**	**6**	**Michael Jacquet (Jr.)**
WR	13	Ryheem Malone (Sr.)	22	Earnest Patterson (Sr.)
LT	**50**	**Robert Hunt (Jr.)**	66	Rico Robinson (Jr.)
LG	70	Staten Wade (Jr.)	71	Akkai Ward (So.)
C	**61**	**Cole Prudhomme (Jr.)**	79	Kordell Brewster (Sr.)
RG	**75**	**Kevin Dotson (Jr.)**	77	Adrian Goodacre (Sr.)
RT	67	Ken Marks (Jr.)	63	Spencer Gardner (Fr.)
TE	80	Chase Rogers (So.)	10	Matt Barnes (Sr.)
QB	**3**	**Jordan Davis (Sr.)**	17	Levi Lewis (So.)
RB	**9**	**Trey Ragas (So.)**	15	Elijah Mitchell (So.)

DEFENSE (3)

DE	**3**	**Joe Dillon (Jr.)**		Chauncey Manac (So.)
DT	98	LaDarrius Kidd (Sr.)		Timaje Porter (Fr.)
DT		Garrald McDowell (Sr.)	99	Tra'Vontae Booker (Jr.)
DE	15	Bennie Higgins (Jr.)	46	Mustafa Mitchell (Sr.)
LB	**59**	**Jacques Boudreaux (Jr.)**	38	Terik Miller (Jr.)
LB	58	Justin Middleton (Sr.)	44	Tanner Holmes (So.)
CB		Kendall Johnson (Sr.)	18	Darrell Miller (Sr.)
CB	9	Kamar Greenhouse (So.)	11	SchDarren Archie (Fr.)
NB	29	Koa Haynes (Sr.)	40	Ja'len Johnson (Fr.)
S	**6**	**Corey Turner (Sr.)**	24	Bralen Trahan (So.)
S	25	Deuce Wallace (Jr.)	37	Blair Brooks (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	36	Stevie Artigue (Sr.)	**KR**	25	Raymond Calais (Jr.)
P		Rhys Byrns (So.)	**PR**	13	Ryheem Malone (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Jordan Davis, 215-122-1,386-8, 10 TDs
Rushing: Trey Ragas, 142 att., 813 yds., 9 TDs
Receiving: Ryheem Malone, 44 rec., 676 yds., 4 TDs
Tackles: Corey Turner, 68
Sacks: Joe Dillon, 4.5
Interceptions: Six players tied with 1

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Billy Napier
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: First Season
Offensive Coordinator: Rob Sale
Defensive Coordinator: Ron Roberts
Lafayette, LA • Cajun Field (41,426)

Brad Kemp/RaginCajuns.com

South Alabama Jaguars

National Forecast: **112** • Sun Belt West Prediction: **4** • Projected Record: **5-7, 4-4 Sun Belt**


JAMARIUS WAY

"They've been an on-paper talented team for a while, but there's never been a clear plan on the field. They're one of the most inconsistent teams in the country."

— An opposing Sun Belt assistant coach

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Louisiana Tech
Sept.	8	at Oklahoma State
Sept.	15	Texas State
Sept.	22	at Memphis
Sept.	29	at Appalachian State
Oct.	6	at Georgia Southern
Oct.	13	Alabama State
Oct.	23	Troy
Nov.	3	at Arkansas State
Nov.	10	UL Monroe
Nov.	17	at Louisiana
Nov.	24	Coastal Carolina

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 4-8, 3-5 SUN BELT

Sept.	2	at Ole Miss	L	27-47
Sept.	8	Oklahoma State	L	7-44
Sept.	16	Alabama A&M	W	45-0
Sept.	23	Idaho (ot)	L	23-29
Sept.	30	at Louisiana Tech	L	16-34
Oct.	11	at Troy	W	19-8
Oct.	21	UL Monroe	W	33-23
Oct.	26	at Georgia State	L	13-21
Nov.	4	Louisiana	L	14-19
Nov.	11	Arkansas State	W	24-19
Nov.	18	at Georgia Southern	L	0-52
Dec.	2	at New Mexico State	L	17-22

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Mo Edwards, WR, Alabaster, AL
2. Roy Yancey, OLB, Opelika, AL*
3. Keith Gallmon, S, Mobile, AL
4. Desmond Trotter, QB, Birmingham, AL
5. Ben Becker, OT, Riverside, MO
6. Josh McCulloch, OG, Houston, TX
7. Carlos Davis, RB, Muscle Shoals, AL
8. Jamall Hickbottom, ILB, Mobile, AL
9. Jared Wilson, RB, Troy, AL
10. Tyler Jernigan, C, Bay Minette, AL

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SBC	NATIONAL
Scoring	19.8 ppg	11	118
Rushing	97.3 ypg	12	126
Passing	237.1 ypg	6	60
Total	334.3 ypg	11	112
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	26.5 ppg	6	63
Rushing	151.8 ypg	6	46
Passing	265.9 ypg	9	114
Total	417.8 ypg	9	85
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
+2	+0.17	3	53

STAT CORNER

28.6

USA got stuffed at or behind the line on 28.6% of its non-sack carries, second worst in FBS and ahead of only Texas State.

OFFENSE New coach Steve Campbell has several tasks in succeeding Joey Jones, and reviving USA's ground game is certainly among them. The Jaguars averaged only 97.3 rushing yards per game, fifth worst in FBS, and their inability to run the ball contributed to several low-scoring losses. The job goes to offensive coordinator Kenny Edenfield, who made Troy one of the Sun Belt's best offenses over the past decade in the same role. But there is no quick fix to the ground game. USA must replace all-time leading rusher Xavier Johnson and build much-needed depth on an inconsistent offensive line.

Running back Tra Minter had 341 rushing yards and 247 receiving yards last season. He will share carries and catches with Tywun Walters, who will miss the first two games due to suspension, and Deonta Moore, who has mostly excelled on special teams. But with no clear-cut answer at running back, the position will be a work in progress. Left tackle Noah Fisher is an all-conference selection, and junior Ryan Alexander is a talented right tackle. But look for movement on the rest of the line until consistency is found.

There may be more immediate offense in the passing game with the return of a deep receiving corps, led by Jamarius Way (762 yards) and Sam Harris (570). Quarterback is a big question that may remain unanswered deep into camp. Former starter Dallas Davis left the team in the spring. Redshirt freshman Cephus Johnson appears to have the lead over Cole Garvin (seven TDs, seven INTs), but Edenfield likely will take his time in choosing his starter.

DEFENSE There is talent and experience on the USA defense, but also limitations because of a lack of pressure up front. The Jaguars were among the worst in the nation last season in sacks and tackles for a loss. Some help could come from Riley Cole, who moved from linebacker to Bandit end as an edge rusher. And two years after transferring from Missouri, Rocel McWilliams is due for a big year at the opposite end.

At linebacker, Bull Barge leads a group that adds athletic Alabama transfer Shawn Jennings. The secondary has the most upside, but that will only show up with a complementary pass rush. Jalen Thompson was one of the Sun Belt's best cover cornerbacks in 2016 before taking an academic redshirt last season. Fellow cornerback Darian Mills had 13 pass breakups last season, most in the league. And safety Nigel Lawrence is the top returning tackler with 83 takedowns.

SPECIALISTS USA is blessed with big legs in a pair of all-conference first-teamers. Corliss Waitman averaged 45.2 yards per punt, ranking eighth in FBS. Gavin Patterson made 16-of-19 field goals, leading the Sun Belt with an 84.2 percent success rate.

FINAL ANALYSIS Campbell was part of two Division II national titles, winning as a player at Troy in 1987 and as a head coach at Delta State in 2000. And he was head coach at Mississippi Gulf Coast for a 2007 junior college national championship. Most recently, Campbell guided Central Arkansas to a Southland Conference title in the FCS ranks.

He takes over a USA program that's been competitive, reaching six wins in three of the past five seasons. But the roster needs re-tooling, and the Jaguars won't win consistently without major strides on offense. It may be difficult to earn bowl eligibility, but the schedule does line up for a late-season surge, with four of the final six games at home.

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)					
WR	**3**	**Jamarius Way (Sr.)**		Jordan McCray (Jr.)	
WR	**7**	**Malik Stanley (Sr.)**	15	Kawaan Baker (So.)	
WR	**4**	**Sam Harris (Sr.)**	88	Jahmmir Taylor (Sr.)	
LT	**57**	**Noah Fisher (Sr.)**	74	Troy Thingstad (Jr.)	
LG	71	Roy Albritton (Jr.)	67	Matt Stefin (Jr.)	
C	66	Brian Ankerson (So.)	65	Zach Davis (Jr.)	
RG	56	Rowan Goodwin (So.)	73	Hadon Merchant (So.)	
RT	**64**	**Ryan Alexander (Jr.)**	59	D'Tavieus Taylor (Sr.)	
TE	**8**	**Andrew Reinkemeyer (Sr.)**	29	Collier Smith (Sr.)	
QB	2	Cephus Johnson (Fr.)	**13**	**Cole Garvin (Sr.)**	
RB	32	Tra Minter (Jr.)	22	Deonta Moore (Sr.)	
DEFENSE (7)					
DE	96	Rocel McWilliams (Sr.)	**17**	**Sean Grayer (Sr.)**	
NT	93	Jordon Beaton (Jr.)	99	Jeffery Whatley (Jr.)	
DT	**12**	**Tyree Turner (Jr.)**	47	Jeremiah Littles (Jr.)	
DE	**4**	**Riley Cole (So.)**	31	Chris Henderson (Jr.)	
LB	8	Bull Barge (Sr.)	36	Nick Mobley (So.)	
LB	10	Roy Yancey (Jr.)	24	Shawn Jennings (So.)	
CB	16	Travis Reed (Jr.)	2	Jalen Thompson (Sr.)	
CB	**21**	**Darian Mills (Sr.)**	7	Bobby Flott (Jr.)	
NB	**5**	**Malcolm Buggs (Sr.)**	9	Sterrling Fisher (So.)	
S	13	D.J. Daniels (Jr.)	**18**	**Tobias Moss (Jr.)**	
S	**6**	**Nigel Lawrence (Sr.)**	27	Spencer Perry (So.)	
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K	89	Gavin Patterson (Sr.)	**KR**	15 Kawaan Baker (So.)	
P	87	Corliss Waitman (Sr.)	**PR**	2 Jalen Thompson (Sr.)	

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Cole Garvin, 232-122-1,490-7, 7 TDs
Rushing: Tra Minter, 107 att., 341 yds., 1 TD
Receiving: Jamarius Way, 47 rec., 762 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: Nigel Lawrence, 83
Sacks: Tyree Turner, 3.5
Interceptions: Tobias Moss, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Steve Campbell
Record at School: First Season
Career Record: 60-23 (7 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Kenny Edenfield
Defensive Coordinator: Greg Stewart
Mobile, AL • Ladd-Peebles Stadium (33,471)

Scott Donaldson/South Alabama Strategic Communications

Texas State **Bobcats**

National Forecast: **126** • Sun Bell West Prediction: **5** • Projected Record: **3-9, 1-7 Sun Belt**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at Rutgers
Sept.	8	Texas Southern
Sept.	15	at South Alabama
Sept.	22	at UTSA
Oct.	6	UL Lafayette
Oct.	11	Georgia Southern
Oct.	20	at UL Monroe
Oct.	27	New Mexico State
Nov.	3	at Georgia State
Nov.	10	Appalachian State
Nov.	17	at Troy
Nov.	24	Arkansas State

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 2-10, 1-7 SUN BELT

Sept.	2	Houston Baptist	W	20-11
Sept.	9	at Colorado	L	3-37
Sept.	16	Appalachian State	L	13-20
Sept.	23	UTSA	L	14-44
Sept.	30	at Wyoming	L	10-45
Oct.	7	UL Monroe	L	27-45
Oct.	12	at UL Lafayette	L	7-24
Oct.	28	at Coastal Carolina	W	27-7
Nov.	4	New Mexico State	L	35-45
Nov.	11	Georgia State	L	30-33
Nov.	18	at Arkansas State	L	12-30
Nov.	24	at Troy	L	9-62

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Tyrese Heard, S, Teague, TX
2. Jacoby Hopkins, WR, Houston, TX
3. Jake Lynch, DE, Richmond, TX
4. Tyler Vitt, QB, San Antonio, TX
5. Ladarius Anthony, S, Houston, TX
6. TJ Graham, WR, Mansfield, TX
7. Pierce Withers, S, Austin, TX
8. Blake Aragon, WR, Stephenville, TX
9. Jalen Momerelle, OT, Houston, TX
10. Jah'Marae Sheread, WR, Houston, TX

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SBC	NATIONAL
Scoring	17.3 ppg	12	123
Rushing	134.1 ypg	8	102
Passing	205.7 ypg	10	82
Total	339.8 ypg	10	108
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	33.6 ppg	9	105
Rushing	141.7 ypg	5	40
Passing	297.3 ypg	11	127
Total	438.9 ypg	10	103
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
-15	-1.25	12	126

STAT CORNER

32.4

Texas State gained 5.0-plus yards on only 32.4% of its carries (123rd in FBS) and got stuffed at or behind the line on 28.7% of its carries (worst in FBS).

OFFENSE After spending one season at Mississippi State, former offensive coordinator Brett Elliott is back at Texas State as the quarterbacks coach. In Elliott's lone season at Texas State (2016), he was instrumental in recruiting multiple quarterbacks, including last year's starter, Damian Williams, a grad transfer from Mississippi State who played his final season of eligibility in 2017. The two top quarterbacks in competition for 2018 were also recruited by Elliott — sophomore Willie Jones III and freshman Jaylen Gipson.

Gipson redshirted last year. Jones saw limited action, completing 18-of-37 passes for 281 yards and rushing for 168 on 43 attempts. Coach Everett Withers says there is an open competition — even incoming freshman Tyler Vitt will have a shot.

Texas State's top receiver from last season, Elijah King, graduated, but the Bobcats return their top five rushers, including three running backs who combined for 1,093 yards and over 4.0 yards per carry — junior Anthony D. Taylor and sophomores Jaylin Nelson, Robert Brown and Anthony Smith.

The Bobcats must replace second-team All-Sun Belt tight end Gabe Schrade. Returning tight ends Elijah Rogers and Brendon Rushing combined for four receptions last season; one or more of the incoming tight ends in the 2018 recruiting class could play right away.

With tackle Tryston Mizerak graduating early and opting to forgo his senior season, junior Aaron Brewer has become the elder statesman on the offensive line. They may be young in the trenches, but the Bobcats are experienced, returning three starters and multiple key reserves.

DEFENSE New coordinator Chris Woods, who spent the last three seasons as a defensive specialist at Oklahoma, will keep the Bobcats' 3-4 base defense intact. Seven of the team's top 10 tacklers from last year are returning, including two of the top three in Bryan London (91) and Frankie Griffin (74). Those two anchor a linebacker unit that is still strong despite losing starters Gabe Loyd and Easy Anyama.

Defensive tackle Jordan Mittie transferred to Kansas State, leaving the Bobcats without their most productive lineman. The hope is that the team's ends — senior Ishmael Davis and juniors Dean Taylor and Kumonde Hines — can help fill the void. Senior Sami Awad and sophomore Caeveon Patton had strong spring camps and are competing for snaps at nose tackle.

The Bobcats are returning three defensive backs with extensive starting experience — senior safety A.J. Krawczyk and junior corners Anthony J. Taylor and JaShon Waddy. However, there are six defensive backs in the incoming class, including Pierce Withers, the son of the head coach, so don't be surprised to see some fresh faces.

SPECIALISTS The Bobcats addressed glaring needs in the kicking game by signing a placekicker (Chris Kessler) and a punter (Clayton Stewart) for the 2018 class. Senior James Sherman, who was used primarily on kickoffs last year, also will compete for both roles.

FINAL ANALYSIS With just 12 seniors on the roster, the Bobcats are fielding a very young team once again. The difference: Their inexperienced underclassmen are now seasoned sophomores and juniors. While this probably won't translate into a winning season, Texas State should start to show progress in Withers' third year.



ANTHONY D. TAYLOR

"They completely started over, maybe more than any program I've seen in the FBS. They got rid of a lot of players and have been so young the last two years."

— An opposing Sun Belt assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (7)

WR	10	Mason Hays (Sr.)	80	Hutch White (Jr.)	
WR	**1**	**Tyler Watts (Sr.)**		Jah'Marae Sheread (Fr.)	
WR	**3**	**Jeremiah Haydel (So.)**	4	Caleb Twyford (So.)	
LT	**55**	**Aaron Brewer (Jr.)**	**75**	**Nic Foster (So.)**	
LG	71	Tate Heitmeier (Fr.)	63	Caleb Carlile (Fr.)	
C	**50**	**Reece Jordan (So.)**	62	Jacob Fryrear (So.)	
RG	51	Josiah Washington (So.)	78	Kregg Lemons (Jr.)	
RT	**72**	**Jacob Rowland (Jr.)**	77	Jacob Janak (Fr.)	
TE	82	Brendon Rushing (Jr.)	85	Elijah Rogers (Sr.)	
QB	8	Willie Jones III (So.)	7	Jaylen Gipson (Fr.)	
RB	**25**	**Anthony D. Taylor (Jr.)**	5	Jaylin Nelson (So.)	

DEFENSE (5)

DE	11	Ishmael Davis (Sr.)	7	Kumonde Hines (Jr.)	
NT	**91**	**Sami Awad (Sr.)**	88	Caeveon Patton (So.)	
DE	94	Dean Taylor (Jr.)	73	Jaquel Pierce (So.)	
OLB	8	Hal Vinson (Jr.)	44	John Brannon (So.)	
ILB	**9**	**Bryan London (Jr.)**	4	Gavin Graham (Jr.)	
ILB	30	Nikolas Daniels (Jr.)	2	Clifton Lewis Jr. (Jr.)	
OLB	**18**	**Frankie Griffin (Sr.)**	27	London Harris (Fr.)	
CB	81	Dennis Johnson (Sr.)	6	Anthony J. Taylor (Jr.)	
CB	**16**	**JaShon Waddy (Jr.)**	3	Kordell Rodgers (So.)	
SS	**47**	**A.J. Krawczyk (Sr.)**		Tyrese Heard (Fr.)	
FS	38	Jalen Smith (Jr.)	21	Josh Newman (So.)	

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	Chris Kessler (Fr.)	**KR**	3	Jeremiah Haydel (So.)
P	Clayton Stewart (Fr.)	**PR**	1	Tyler Watts (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Willie Jones III, 37-18-281-1, 0 TDs
Rushing: Anthony D. Taylor, 108 att., 436 yds., 2 TDs
Receiving: Tyler Watts, 40 rec., 332 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Bryan London II, 91
Sacks: Frankie Griffin, 4.0
Interceptions: None

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Everett Withers
Record at School: 4-20 (2 years)
Career Record: 29-33 (5 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Zak Kuhr
Defensive Coordinator: Chris Woods
San Marcos, TX • Bobcat Stadium (30,000)

AP

ULM Warhawks

National Forecast: **98** • Sun Belt West Prediction: **2** • Projected Record: **6-6, 5-3 Sun Belt**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	SE Louisiana
Sept.	8	at Southern Miss
Sept.	15	at Texas A&M
Sept.	22	Troy
Sept.	29	at Georgia State
Oct.	6	at Ole Miss
Oct.	13	at Coastal Carolina
Oct.	20	Texas State
Nov.	3	Georgia Southern
Nov.	10	at South Alabama
Nov.	17	at Arkansas State
Nov.	24	Louisiana

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 4-8, 4-4 SUN BELT

Aug.	31	at Memphis	L	29-37
Sept.	16	Southern Miss	L	17-28
Sept.	23	at Louisiana (ot)	W	56-50
Sept.	30	Coastal Carolina	W	51-43
Oct.	7	at Texas State	W	45-27
Oct.	14	Georgia State	L	37-47
Oct.	21	at South Alabama	L	23-33
Oct.	28	at Idaho	L	23-31
Nov.	4	Appalachian State	W	52-45
Nov.	18	at Auburn	L	14-42
Nov.	25	Arkansas State	L	50-67
Dec.	2	at Florida State	L	10-42

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Malik Jackson, WR, Lufkin, TX
2. Dayonte Roberts, DT, Cabot, AR
3. Brennen Wooten, QB, San Angelo, TX*
4. Colby Suits, QB, Forney, TX
5. Blake Lodes, OT, Mansfield, TX
6. Keyshawn Johnson, OLB, Duncanville, TX
7. Bacari Middleton, S, Grand Prairie, TX
8. Brandon Nettles, DE, Arlington, TX
9. Myles Cole, DE, Shreveport, LA
10. Cal Kee, S, Hampton, VA*

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SBC	NATIONAL
Scoring	33.9 ppg	2	25
Rushing	170.3 ypg	4	58
Passing	287.7 ypg	3	24
Total	458.0 ypg	2	21
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	41.0 ppg	12	126
Rushing	232.8 ypg	11	119
Passing	299.3 ypg	12	128
Total	532.1 ypg	12	129
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
-4	-0.33	9	93

STAT CORNER

6.4

ULM went from averaging 5.1 yards per play (112th in FBS) to 6.4 in 2017 (24th), the second-largest increase in the Group of 5.

OFFENSE Eight starters are back from an offense that averaged 33.9 points and 458.0 yards per game last season. And the most important piece, dual-threat quarterback Caleb Evans, enters his second season as starter with a high ceiling. As a sophomore, Evans rushed for 573 yards and a conference-best 13 TDs and passed for 2,868 yards and 17 TDs, and he's surrounded by a strong supporting cast. Evans will work behind four returning starters on a line that protected him well last season. He will throw to a talented receiving corps, led by All-America all-purpose performer Marcus Green (54 catches, 812 yards, five TDs) and R.J. Turner (38 catches, 693 yards).

A big X-factor is the growth of running back Derrick Gore, who was solid but not spectacular last season after transferring from Alabama. He led the team with 585 rushing yards, but he reached 20 carries in only two games and ran for 100 yards only once. ULM will mix in multiple ball carriers, but the offense will be at its best if Gore can look like a feature back.

DEFENSE It can't get much worse for a defense that allowed 41.0 points and 532.1 yards per game last season. In fairness, the Warhawks were ravaged by injuries. Now healthy, they must improve dramatically.

In a 4-2-5 scheme, the secondary is pivotal. Safeties Luke Hedrick, Nick Ingram and Collin Turner return after missing much of last season due to injuries. Turner will start at buck safety. Hedrick and Ingram were still recovering in the spring, but even their limited return allowed Marcus Hubbard and Rhoy Williams to move from safety to cornerback, their natural position.

Linebacker should be a strength with veterans David Griffith, Chase Day and Cortez Sisco back. But, again, they were the cogs of a defense near the bottom of the FBS ranks, so experience doesn't necessarily equal performance. ULM needs a better pass rush, but a healthy secondary should aid in that area.

A few junior college transfers will get on the field, and some injured veterans return and their replacements now have experience. It should create much-needed competition that was absent last season.

SPECIALISTS Green is ULM's most explosive weapon, and nearly half of his school-record 2,008 all-purpose yards came in the return game. He tied for first in the FBS with four kick return TDs and ranked fourth with a 32.4-yard average. Craig Ford is a steady placekicker, making 70 percent (28-of-40) of his career field goal attempts. Mark Deaves, a 25-year-old Australian, takes over as punter.

FINAL ANALYSIS From a preseason perspective, it's a simple contrast. ULM has a good offense and a bad defense. Coach Matt Viator's team needs to sustain the former while improving the latter for the Warhawks to be in bowl contention. That's especially needed in Sun Belt play, where ULM allowed an average of 41.3 points in its four wins.

Overall, ULM has posted back-to-back 4–8 seasons since Viator's hiring, but there are hints of progress. The Warhawks went 1–14 on the road in two seasons before Viator, but they won two road games last season.

Any chance at a winning record must include victories in non-conference play, where ULM went 0–4 last season. There are tough trips to Ole Miss and Texas A&M on the schedule, but also more manageable matchups against Southern Miss and FCS foe Southeastern Louisiana.



CALEB EVANS

"The offense is scary enough to keep them in any game in conference play, but they don't have the same team speed on defense."

— An opposing Sun Belt assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)

WR	**2**	**R.J. Turner (Jr.)**	7	Zachari Jackson (Fr.)
WR	**3**	**Marcus Green (Sr.)**	12	Markis McCray (Sr.)
WR	17	Xavier Brown (Sr.)	4	Brandius Batiste (So.)
LT	77	Trace Ellison (Jr.)	74	Jo'Quarius Savage (Sr.)
LG	**73**	**Devin Jackson (Jr.)**	78	Brendon Jones (Jr.)
C	**56**	**Bobby Reynolds (Jr.)**	71	Noah Ramsey (So.)
RG	**68**	**T.J. Fiailoa (So.)**	66	Ben Moye (Jr.)
RT	**64**	**Eastwood Thomas (Jr.)**	72	Samuel Williams (So.)
TE	86	Josh Pederson (So.)	82	Sloan Spiller (Sr.)
QB	**6**	**Caleb Evans (Jr.)**	13	Brennen Wooten (So.)
RB	**27**	**Derrick Gore (Sr.)**	33	Austin Vaughn (Jr.)

DEFENSE (7)

DE	97	Kerry Starks (So.)	98	Sam Miller (Jr.)
NT	99	Derion Ford (Sr.)	**93**	**Mason Husmann (So.)**
DT	**90**	**Jaylen Veasley (Jr.)**	94	Tyler Johnson (Sr.)
DE	**58**	**Donald Louis (Jr.)**	44	Ty Shelby (So.)
MLB	4	Rashaad Harding (So.)	**32**	**Chase Day (Jr.)**
WLB	**14**	**David Griffith (Sr.)**	7	Cortez Sisco (Jr.)
CB	**9**	**Marcus Hubbard (Sr.)**	21	Corey Straughter (So.)
CB	13	Rhoy Williams (Sr.)	20	Kenderick Marbles (So.)
BUCK	3	Collin Turner (Sr.)	29	Logan Latin (So.)
S	**6**	**Wesley Thompson (Sr.)**	34	Luke Hedrick (Jr.)
S	23	Nick Ingram (Jr.)	15	Austin Hawley (So.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	16	Craig Ford (Sr.)	**KR**	3	Marcus Green (Sr.)
P	39	Mark Deaves (Fr.)	**PR**	3	Marcus Green (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Caleb Evans, 344-211-2,868-6, 17 TDs
Rushing: Derrick Gore, 164 att., 585 yds., 6 TDs
Receiving: Marcus Green, 54 rec., 812 yds., 5 TDs
Tackles: David Griffith, 76
Sacks: Kerry Starks, 2.5
Interceptions: Corey Straughter, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Matt Viator
Record at School: 8-16 (2 years)
Career Record: 86-49 (12 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Matt Kubik
Defensive Coordinator: Mike Collins
Monroe, LA • Malone Stadium (30,427)

Army West Point Black Knights

National Forecast: **57** • Projected Record: **8-4**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at Duke
Sept.	8	Liberty
Sept.	15	Hawaii
Sept.	22	at Oklahoma
Sept.	29	at Buffalo
Oct.	13	at San Jose State
Oct.	20	Miami (Ohio)
Oct.	27	at Eastern Michigan
Nov.	3	Air Force
Nov.	10	Lafayette
Nov.	17	Colgate
Dec.	8	vs. Navy #

#Philadelphia, PA

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 10-3

Sept.	1	Fordham	W	64-6
Sept.	9	Buffalo	W	21-17
Sept.	16	at Ohio State	L	7-38
Sept.	23	at Tulane	L	17-21
Sept.	30	UTEP	W	35-21
Oct.	7	at Rice	W	49-12
Oct.	14	Eastern Michigan	W	28-27
Oct.	21	Temple (ot)	W	31-28
Nov.	4	at Air Force	W	21-0
Nov.	11	Duke	W	21-16
Nov.	18	at North Texas	L	49-52
Dec.	9	vs. Navy #	W	14-13
Dec.	23	vs. San Diego State %	W	42-35

#Philadelphia %Armed Forces Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Damir Faison, DE, Charlotte, NC
2. Cade Barnard, ILB, Seminole, TX
3. Kwabena Bonsu, DT, Avondale Estates, GA
4. Marcus Mosley, DE, Duncanville, TX
5. Brandon Mays, OLB, Melbourne, FL
6. Cameron Hoelscher, ILB, Springfield, OH
7. Ryan Bryce, DT, Philadelphia, PA
8. John Bailey Gullatt, ILB, West Monroe, LA
9. Kenese Leomiti, DT, Corpus Christi, TX
10. Jontae Dobson, CB, Indianapolis, IN

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	NATIONAL
Scoring	30.7 ppg	46
Rushing	362.3 ypg	1
Passing	27.8 ypg	130
Total	390.1 ypg	76
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	22.0 ppg	32
Rushing	172.9 ypg	75
Passing	176.8 ypg	14
Total	349.7 ypg	32
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**NATIONAL**
+5	+0.38	30

STAT CORNER

31.9

Army snapped the ball every 31.9 seconds, the slowest tempo in the country. The national average in 2017: every 25.8 seconds.

OFFENSE The Black Knights went through spring drills not knowing whether Ahmad Bradshaw, who ranks fifth on Army's all-time career rushing list despite not playing as a freshman, would be granted a fourth year of eligibility. Coach Jeff Monken looked at different options under center, including giving plenty of reps to 5'9" junior Kell Walker, who averaged 7.3 yards per carry as a slot back last year. Junior Kelvin Hopkins emerged as Bradshaw's backup last season and has the strongest arm among the group. Senior Luke Langdon has also been given an opportunity to step up.

Whoever is under center will have experienced backs behind him, including senior fullbacks Darnell Woolfolk and Andy Davidson. The duo combined for 1,439 yards and 19 touchdowns last season. Four starters from the offensive line graduated, leaving senior center Bryce Holland to lead the group. The line should benefit from the return of guard Mike Johnson, who sat out last season due to an ACL injury.

DEFENSE While the graduation of linebacker Alex Aukerman and end John Voit leaves a void in leadership, the Black Knights return five of their top seven tacklers. Led by linebackers James Nachtigal (team-leading 103 tackles) and Cole Christiansen, a unit that ranked 32nd nationally in total defense should be strong again.

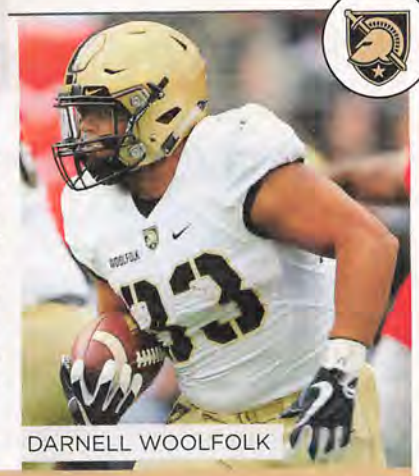
Chandler Ramirez made the move from linebacker to end in the spring after Amadeo West suffered a setback while rehabbing a torn ACL.

Monken is looking for a leader to step up in a secondary that lost the services of four-year starting safety Rhyan England. One thing is for sure: There is plenty of experience, as six players started at least five games last season, including corner Elijah Riley. The junior sat out the first eight games of 2017 due to academic issues before returning to start the final five contests. Max Regan, who started five games last year when England was injured, is in line take over at one safety spot. The unit could receive a boost from the return of corner Jalen Sharp, who was limited to two games a year ago due to a knee injury.

SPECIALISTS Walker handled the bulk of the kick return duties last season, though that will change if he is anointed QB. Junior Glen Coates, a defensive back, has some experience in that area. Thanks to senior Nick Schrage and his 42.9-yard average, Army improved from last in the FBS in punting to 46th.

FINAL ANALYSIS In four seasons, Monken has taken Army from a program that lost to Yale to one that has defeated Navy and won a bowl in consecutive years. Suddenly, the team has a number of players who have no idea what it is like to experience a losing season.

Even if Bradshaw does not return, the culture Monken has developed combined with a good number of experienced players should allow for the winning ways to continue. While there is a trip to Norman in September, the Sooners are the only FBS team on Army's schedule that won more than seven games last season. The slate also includes two FCS programs and one transitioning to the FBS. It should all add up to the academy playing in a bowl game for a third consecutive season — something that has never happened. "I think it's easy for guys that haven't experienced anything but winning seasons to maybe think it's a lot easier than it is," Monken says. "We have to keep our team from being complacent."



DARNELL WOOLFOLK

"(Jeff) has done an incredible job there. They had a great season. They beat Navy two times in a row. Just an incredible job."

— An opposing assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (3)

WR	88	Cam Harrison (So.)	82	Kjetil Cline (Jr.)
TE	85	Quinten Parker (Sr.)	83	Zach Saum (Sr.)
LT	74	Austin Schuffert (Sr.)	53	Jeff Panara (Sr.)
LG	59	Mike Johnson (Jr.)	75	Jack Sides (Jr.)
C	**65**	**Bryce Holland (Sr.)**	76	Peyton Reeder (So.)
RG	73	Jaxson Deaton (Jr.)	63	Jake Baumert (Jr.)
RT	62	Michael Gerber (So.)	77	Noah Utley (Jr.)
QB	8	Kelvin Hopkins (Jr.)	9	Luke Langdon (Sr.)
SB	3	Jordan Asberry (Sr.)	22	Calen Holt (Sr.)
SB	**5**	**Kell Walker (Jr.)**	32	Artice Hobbs IV (So.)
FB	**33**	**Darnell Woolfolk (Sr.)**	40	Andy Davidson (Sr.)

DEFENSE (8)

DE	29	Chandler Ramirez (S.)	57	Jacob Covington (Jr.)
NT	**91**	**Wunmi Oyetuga (Sr.)**	99	Cordarrell Davis (Sr.)
NG	**77**	**Raymond Wright (Sr.)**	93	Rod Stoddard II (Jr.)
OLB	**56**	**Kenneth Brinson (Sr.)**	11	Donavan Lynch (Jr.)
ILB	**19**	**James Nachtigal (Sr.)**	15	Ryan Parker (Jr.)
ILB	**54**	**Cole Christiansen (Jr.)**	34	Jack King (Jr.)
OLB	18	Jake Ellington (Jr.)	37	Aaron Jones (So.)
CB	23	Elijah Riley (Jr.)	**7**	**Jaylon McClinton (Jr.)**
CB	**10**	**Mike Reynolds (Sr.)**	14	Jalen Sharp (Sr.)
S	**2**	**James Gibson (Sr.)**	9	Justin Thomas Jr. (So.)
S	4	Max Regan (Sr.)	20	Cameron Jones (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	99	Landon Salyers (So.)	**KR**	5 Kell Walker (Jr.)
P	38	Nick Schrage (Sr.)	**PR**	10 Mike Reynolds (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Kelvin Hopkins Jr., 18-6-76-1, 1 TD
Rushing: Darnell Woolfolk, 157 att., 812 yds., 14 TDs
Receiving: Kell Walker, 5 rec., 111 yds, 0 TDs
Tackles: James Nachtigal, 103
Sacks: James Nachtigal, 5.0
Interceptions: Max Regan, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Jeff Monken
Record at School: 24-26 (4 years)
Career Record: 62-42 (8 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Brent Davis
Defensive Coordinator: Jay Bateman
West Point, NY • Michie Stadium (38,000)

USMA Athletics

BYU Cougars

National Forecast: **86** • Projected Record: **5-7**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	at Arizona
Sept.	8	California
Sept.	15	at Wisconsin
Sept.	22	McNeese State
Sept.	29	at Washington
Oct.	5	Utah State
Oct.	13	Hawaii
Oct.	27	Northern Illinois
Nov.	3	at Boise State
Nov.	10	at Massachusetts #
Nov.	17	New Mexico State
Nov.	24	at Utah

#Foxboro, MA

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 4-9

Aug.	26	Portland State	W	20-6
Sept.	2	vs. LSU #	L	0-27
Sept.	9	Utah	L	13-19
Sept.	16	Wisconsin	L	6-40
Sept.	29	at Utah State	L	24-40
Oct.	6	Boise State	L	7-24
Oct.	14	at Mississippi State	L	10-35
Oct.	21	at East Carolina	L	17-33
Oct.	28	San Jose State	W	41-20
Nov.	4	at Fresno State	L	13-20
Nov.	10	at UNLV	W	31-21
Nov.	18	Massachusetts	L	10-16
Nov.	25	at Hawaii	W	30-20

#New Orleans

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Gunner Romney, WR, Chandler, AZ
2. Zach Wilson, QB, Draper, UT
3. Dallin Holker, TE, Lehi, UT
4. Connor Pay, OT, Highland, UT
5. Jacob Smith, OT, Farmington, MN
6. Campbell Barrington, OT, Spokane, WA
7. Amone Finau, RB, Kearns, UT
8. Chinonso Opara, DE, Draper, UT
9. Viliami Tausinga, ILB, Salt Lake City, UT
10. Oliver Nasilai, ILB, Jessieville, AR

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	NATIONAL
Scoring	17.1 ppg	124
Rushing	130.5 ypg	105
Passing	194.6 ypg	90
Total	325.2 ypg	119
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	24.7 ppg	46
Rushing	147.6 ypg	44
Passing	225.2 ypg	67
Total	372.8 ypg	51
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**NATIONAL**
-10	-0.77	118

STAT CORNER

222

From 1976-2016, BYU only once scored fewer than 250 points in a season. The Cougars scored only 222 in 2017.

OFFENSE BYU's first losing season in 13 years resulted in the upheaval of Kalani Sitake's coaching staff. The arrival of offensive coordinator Jeff Grimes from LSU brought a new scheme. Three quarterbacks started multiple games last season, and all three have returned, joining freshman Zach Wilson in a four-way competition that likely won't be resolved until just before the season opener. Tanner Mangum, who has started 20 games in his career, has recovered from an Achilles injury sooner than expected but was limited in the spring. Beau Hoge, also injured late in 2017, took most of the first-team snaps in the spring. Joe Critchlow, the starter in the final three games, and Wilson also received a lot of spring work.

Sitake was frustrated that BYU never developed an offensive identity last season. He hoped to build an offense around running back Ula Tolutau, but Tolutau's injuries and a midseason suspension spoiled that plan. Squally Canada overcame injuries to have a strong November, and he showed explosiveness in the spring. Redshirt freshman Zach Katoa is a future standout.

The inability of BYU's receivers to get open may have been the offense's biggest limitation in 2017. The Cougars lost only one player who caught more than two passes last season and have upgraded the position with graduate transfer Dylan Collie from Hawaii and freshman Gunner Romney. BYU will continue to build its passing scheme around tight end Matt Bushman, who caught 49 passes for 520 yards as a freshman.

The Cougars must replace four-year starting center Tejan Koroma, but the offensive line overall appears stronger than last year's. Notre Dame transfer Tristen Hoge will take one of the guard positions.

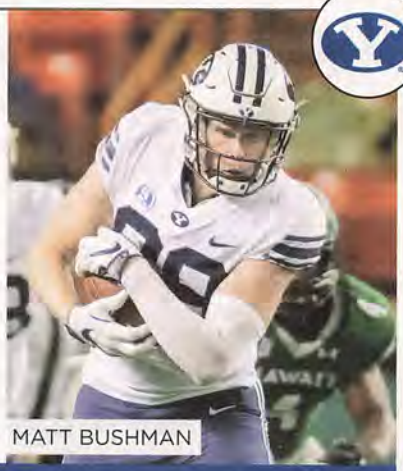
DEFENSE BYU's defense played well enough for the Cougars to win more games last season, but defensive coordinator Ilaisa Tuiaki wants his group to be more disruptive with sacks and takeaways. That starts up front, where end Corbin Kaufusi is an athletic pass rusher who should improve on his six sacks of 2017.

BYU will miss Fred Warner, a playmaker who was the team's leading tackler. Sione Takitaki, who led the Cougars with 12.5 tackles for a loss, is expected to thrive at outside linebacker. The staff's main strategy is to find faster linebackers. Zayne Anderson moved from safety to linebacker in the spring. "For some of the schemes we are asking our guys to do, we are going to need more speed on the field," Sitake says.

The secondary was the BYU defense's weakness last season. It is a good sign that the coaches felt good enough about their depth at cornerback to move Dayan Ghanwoloku and Troy Warner to safety.

SPECIALISTS The struggles of BYU's offense limited the field goal opportunities for kicker Rhett Almond in 2017. Almond will have to improve to keep his job over Skyler Southam, who's returning from a church mission. Like many programs, BYU has looked to Australia for punting help. Danny Jones is an excellent athlete who should take the job.

FINAL ANALYSIS BYU's sudden drop to 4–9 has created quite a challenge for Sitake in his third season on the job. "There's a huge urgency to get better," Sitake says. That can happen if the Cougars start putting points on the scoreboard. BYU scored 17 or fewer points in eight defeats in 2017, continually frustrating Sitake. An improved offensive line and receiving corps, along with more continuity at quarterback, should help in this pivotal year for the independent program.



MATT BUSHMAN

"Kalani Sitake is a beloved former player at BYU, but that's not going to help him erase the bad feelings from 4-9 last year."

— An opposing assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)				
WR	**21**	**Talon Shumway (Jr.)**		Gunner Romney (Fr.)
WR	13	Micah Simon (Jr.)	1	Akile Davis (Jr.)
WR	15	Aleva Hifo (Jr.)		Dylan Collie (Sr.)
LT	67	Brady Christensen (Fr.)	74	Kieffer Longson (So.)
LG	**59**	**Thomas Shoaf (Jr.)**	77	Chandon Herring (So.)
C	66	James Empey (Fr.)	70	Jacob Jimenez (Jr.)
RG	69	Tristen Hoge (So.)	58	Austin Chambers (So.)
RT	**71**	**Austin Hoyt (Sr.)**	76	Harris LaChance (Fr.)
TE	**89**	**Matt Bushman (So.)**	17	Moroni Laulu-Pututau (Jr.)
QB	**12**	**Tanner Mangum (Sr.)**	10	Joe Critchlow (So.)
RB	22	Squally Canada (Sr.)	32	Zach Katoa (Fr.)
DEFENSE (6)				
DE	**90**	**Corbin Kaufusi (Sr.)**	58	Uriah Leiataua (So.)
NT	95	Khyiris Tonga (So.)	75	Wayne Tei-Kirby (So.)
DT	50	Tevita Mo'unga (Jr.)	54	Merrill Taliauli (Sr.)
DE	52	Trajan Pili (Jr.)	92	Devin Kaufusi (Fr.)
LB	**16**	**Sione Takitaki (Sr.)**	53	Isaiah Kaufusi (So.)
LB	**38**	**Butch Pau'u (Sr.)**	41	Adam Pulsipher (Sr.)
LB	**23**	**Zayne Anderson (Sr.)**	44	Riggs Powell (Sr.)
CB	12	Trevion Greene (Jr.)	30	Keenan Ellis (Fr.)
CB	32	Chris Wilcox (Jr.)	18	Michael Shelton (Sr.)
FS	11	Austin Lee (Jr.)	**1**	**Troy Warner (Jr.)**
SS	**5**	**Dayan Ghanwoloku (Jr.)**	25	Tanner Jacobson (Sr.)
SPECIAL TEAMS				
K	26	Rhett Almond (Sr.)	**KR**	34 Riley Burt (Jr.)
P		Danny Jones (Fr.)	**PR**	15 Aleva Hifo (Jr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Tanner Mangum, 257-147-1,540-9, 8 TDs
Rushing: Squally Canada, 120 att., 710 yds., 6 TDs
Receiving: Matt Bushman, 49 rec., 520 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: Sione Takitaki, 79
Sacks: Corbin Kaufusi, 6.0
Interceptions: Zayne Anderson, Dayan Ghanwoloku, 2

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Kalani Sitake
Record at School: 13-13 (2 years)
Career Record: 13-13 (2 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Jeff Grimes
Defensive Coordinator: Ilaisa Tuiaki
Provo, UT • LaVell Edwards Stadium (63,470)

AP

Liberty **Flames**

National Forecast: **124** • Projected Record: **3-9**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Old Dominion
Sept.	8	at Army
Sept.	15	Norfolk State
Sept.	22	North Texas
Sept.	29	at New Mexico
Oct	6	at New Mexico State
Oct.	13	Troy
Oct.	20	Idaho State
Nov.	3	at Massachusetts
Nov.	10	at Virginia
Nov.	17	at Auburn
Nov.	24	New Mexico State

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 6-5

Sept.	2	at Baylor	W	48-45
Sept.	9	Morehead State	W	58-17
Sept.	16	Indiana State	W	42-41
Sept.	23	at Jacksonville St.	L	10-31
Sept.	30	St. Francis (Pa.)	L	7-13
Oct.	14	Kennesaw State	L	28-42
Oct.	21	at Monmouth	L	39-56
Oct.	28	at Gardner-Webb	W	33-17
Nov.	4	Duquesne	W	27-24
Nov.	11	Presbyterian	W	47-28
Nov.	18	at Charleston So.	L	19-20

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Henry Chibueze, OG, Woodbridge, VA
2. Troy Henderson, RB, Franklin, TN
3. Austin Lewis, DE, Jonesborough, TN
4. Hunter Goetz, S, Davie, FL
5. Brendan Schlittler, OT, Eureka, MO
6. Logan Beadles, DT, Piedmont, AL
7. Tyren Dupree, LB, Leesburg, AL
8. Emmanuel Cater, DE, Hiram, GA
9. Jacob Bodden, OG, Hoover, AL
10. Ricky Lester, S, Houston, TX

2017 AVERAGES

OFFENSE	PER GAME
Scoring	32.5 ppg
Rushing	139.3 ypg
Passing	309.9 ypg
Total	449.2 ypg
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**
Scoring	30.4 ppg
Rushing	225.0 ypg
Passing	223.5 ypg
Total	448.5 ypg
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**
+3	+0.27

STAT CORNER

1

Turner Gill is 1-1 vs. Big 12 teams in his six years as the coach at Liberty. He went 1-16 vs. Big 12 teams in his two years as the coach at Liberty (2010-11).

OFFENSE Liberty's offense has trended toward an up-tempo scheme since Joe Dailey took over as offensive coordinator prior to the 2016 season. The Flames averaged 76 plays per game last season — including games with 103 and 100 — and the target this season is 80.

Quarterback Buckshot Calvert threw for 250 or more yards in eight of the Flames' 11 games on his way to setting program single-season records in passing yards (3,363), passing attempts (438) and touchdown passes (29).

Calvert's development can be traced to his rapport with wide receiver Antonio Gandy-Golden, who enjoyed a breakout season with 1,066 yards and 10 touchdowns on 69 catches. He was one of four Liberty wide receivers to record more than 500 yards receiving last season.

Running back depth will need to be addressed after the graduation of Carrington Mosley and Todd Macon. Frankie Hickson has rushed for 825 yards and six touchdowns in two seasons and is responsible for 194 of the 224 carries on the roster. The staff is high on redshirt freshman Frank Boyd.

Right guard Dontae Duff anchors an offensive line that returns four starters and might be one of the deeper and more talented units Liberty has fielded in recent memory.

DEFENSE The Flames took a giant step backward in the second half of last season when the defensive line rotation was trimmed to six players. Liberty allowed 131.4 rushing yards in the first five games with a healthy eight-man rotation, then surrendered a whopping 303.0 yards per game on the ground in the final six weeks. That forced Liberty to go the junior college route to get bodies who can immediately contribute on the line, and Vincent Elefante, Devin Pearson and Jessie Lemonier are expected to help solidify a unit that features NFL prospect Juwan Wells at rush end.

Solomon Ajayi, the brother of NFL running back Jay Ajayi, will be asked to replace the productivity and leadership of Solomon McGinty at weak-side linebacker. Ajayi sat out last season with a hand injury, and his backup is Brandon Tillmon, who moves to linebacker after starting all of last season at strong safety.

The secondary returns two cornerbacks with at least six starts last season in Jeremy Peters and Jimmy Faulks, and a healthy Malik Matthews should help shore up a pass defense that allowed 223.5 yards per game through the air — 50 more than in 2016.

SPECIALISTS Alex Probert is 23-of-31 on field goal attempts of 30 yards or more in two seasons at Liberty, but he will have to break in a third different holder and a new long snapper this season. Redshirt freshman Aidan Alves is the new punter.

FINAL ANALYSIS All of the momentum Liberty had at the beginning of last season following the announcement of the transition to the FBS and the landmark victory at Baylor is gone after the Flames struggled late in the year. The heartbreaking loss in the season finale at Charleston Southern marked the second straight season the Flames have ended the campaign with a defeat, and it was the third straight season the program finished 6–5 after its lone FCS playoff appearance in 2014. Sustaining success throughout an entire season has been Liberty's struggle under coach Turner Gill, and if the offense is unable to score enough points to negate the defense's inability to stop the run, Liberty's streak of 12 consecutive winning seasons will end.



BUCKSHOT CALVERT

"They've got some talent — they won at Baylor last year — but it's going to be a tough transition for them. Playing (FBS) teams every week will be challenging."

— An opposing assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

		OFFENSE (9)		
WR	82	**B.J. Farrow (Sr.)**	2	Kevin Shaa (Jr.)
WR	11	**Antonio Gandy-Golden (Jr.)**		Sean Queen (Fr.)
WR	7	**Damian King (Sr.)**	87	Cephus Reddick (Sr.)
LT	74	**Julio Lozano (Sr.)**	72	James Passmore (Sr.)
LG	66	**Ethan Crawford (Jr.)**	77	Cooper McCaw (Fr.)
C	65	**Thomas Sargeant (So.)**	61	Ben Fiordelise (Jr.)
RG	56	**Dontae Duff (Jr.)**	59	Damian Bounds (So.)
RT	68	Tristan Schultz (So.)	73	Sam Isaacson (Jr.)
TE		Chris Barrett (So.)	40	**Zac Foutz (Jr.)**
QB	12	**Buckshot Calvert (Jr.)**	8	Landon Brown (Fr.)
RB	23	Frankie Hickson (Jr.)	6	Frank Boyd (Fr.)
		DEFENSE (6)		
DE	55	**Tolen Avery (Sr.)**		Jessie Lemonier (Jr.)
DT	94	Vincent Elefante (Jr.)	90	Mitchell Hurtado (Sr.)
NG	97	Elisha Mitchell (So.)	34	Devin Pearson (Jr.)
DE	54	**Juwan Wells (Sr.)**	15	Jayod Sanders (So.)
MLB	5	Lucas Irons (Sr.)	17	Kedrick Bradley (Sr.)
OLB	7	Solomon Ajayi (Jr.)	12	**Brandon Tillmon (Jr.)**
SPUR	6	Ceneca Espinoza Jr. (So.)	3	**Rion Davis (Jr.)**
CB	24	Malik Matthews (Jr.)	8	Jimmy Faulks (Jr.)
CB	2	**Jeremy Peters (Sr.)**	4	Keith Best (Fr.)
SS	28	**Corbin Jackson (Sr.)**	32	Aaron Pierre (Fr.)
FS	31	Elijah Benton (Jr.)	43	Benjamin Alexander (So.)
		SPECIAL TEAMS		
K	10	Alex Probert (Jr.)	KR	23 Frankie Hickson (Jr.)
P	13	Aidan Alves (Fr.)	PR	5 D.J. Stubbs (So.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Stephen Calvert, 438-257-3,363-6, 29 TDs
Rushing: Frankie Hickson, 100 att., 375 yds., 2 TDs
Receiving: Antonio Gandy-Golden, 69 rec., 1,066 yds., 10 TDs
Tackles: Juwan Wells, 74
Sacks: Juwan Wells, 4.5
Interceptions: Jeremy Peters, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Turner Gill
Record at School: 41-29 (6 years)
Career Record: 66-78 (12 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Joe Dailey
Defensive Coordinator: Robert Wimberly
Lynchburg, VA • Williams Stadium (20,000)

Liberty University Athletics

New Mexico State **Aggies**

National Forecast: **114** • Projected Record: **5-7**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug.	25	Wyoming
Aug.	30	at Minnesota
Sept.	8	at Utah State
Sept.	15	New Mexico
Sept.	22	at UTEP
Oct.	6	Liberty
Oct.	13	at UL Lafayette
Oct.	20	Georgia Southern
Oct.	27	at Texas State
Nov.	3	Alcorn State
Nov.	17	at BYU
Nov.	24	at Liberty

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 7-6, 4-4 SUN BELT

Aug.	31	at Arizona State	L	31-37
Sept.	9	at New Mexico	W	30-28
Sept.	16	Troy	L	24-27
Sept.	23	UTEP	W	41-14
Sept.	30	at Arkansas	L	24-42
Oct.	7	at Appalachian State	L	31-45
Oct.	14	at Georgia Southern	W	35-27
Oct.	28	Arkansas State	L	21-37
Nov.	4	at Texas State	W	45-35
Nov.	18	at Louisiana	L	34-47
Nov.	25	Idaho	W	17-10
Dec.	2	South Alabama	W	22-17
Dec.	29	vs. Utah State # (ot)	W	26-20

#Arizona Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Rodney McGraw II, S, Missouri City, TX
2. Devin Richardson, OLB, Klein, TX
3. Naveon Mitchell, RB, Richmond, TX
4. John Graves III, Lancaster, TX
5. Max Wilhite, OT, Goodyear, AZ
6. Kai Golden, DT, Tucson, AZ
7. Austin Young, OT, Goodyear, AZ
8. Grant Mileski, TE, Scottsdale, AZ
9. Donavan King, DE, Pearland, TX
10. Caleb Mills, WR, Dodge, KS*

*junior college transfer

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	SBC	NATIONAL
Scoring	29.3 ppg	5	55
Rushing	106.8 ypg	11	122
Passing	340.2 ypg	2	6
Total	446.9 ypg	3	28
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	29.7 ppg	7	86
Rushing	166.5 ypg	7	65
Passing	234.4 ypg	5	79
Total	400.8 ypg	6	74
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**SBC**	**NATIONAL**
-2	-0.15	8	81

STAT CORNER

4

Only four FBS defenders combined 15 TFLs with eight passes defensed in 2017; NMSU linebacker Terrill Hanks was one of them.

OFFENSE New Mexico State coach Doug Martin, also his team's offensive coordinator, will have to replace a three-year starter at quarterback, a four-year starter at running back and an NFL prospect at wide receiver in 2018.

Senior QB Nick Jeanty has five career starts and has passed for 1,028 yards with six TDs and six interceptions in 14 games. The Aggies added Matthew Romero in the 2018 recruiting class. Romero passed for 5,489 yards with 49 touchdowns in two seasons in junior college. Freshmen Cameron Matthews, Josh Adkins and Jeremy Hodge also competed during spring practice, but Martin won't name a starter until fall camp.

Fortunately for the new starting QB, the Aggies return six offensive linemen with starting experience, including center Jamin Smith, who was granted a sixth year after missing most of 2016 with an injury. The Aggies finished 2017 sixth in the country in passing offense with 340.2 yards per game.

Junior running back Jason Huntley was a dual threat in 2017 with 420 yards rushing to go along with 39 receptions for 363 yards. Senior wide receiver Johnathan Boone and slot receivers OJ Clark and Anthony Muse — each with more than 30 receptions last season — lead an experienced receiving corps that is never short on opportunities in Martin's wide-open attack.

DEFENSE In his second year at New Mexico State, defensive coordinator Frank Spaziani — a former head coach at Boston College — turned one of the nation's worst defenses into a unit that finished second in the NCAA in sacks (43, up from 11 in 2016) and seventh in third-down stops. The Aggies led the Sun Belt with 27 forced turnovers as Spaziani played four linebackers for the majority of the season and cranked up the pressure. The Aggies also did a better job limiting big plays in 2017, something that has plagued the program for years. Seven starters return from that unit, which could be even better in 2018.

Junior defensive lineman Cedric Wilcots II was a first-team All-Sun Belt pick after recording 8.5 sacks; strong-side linebacker Terrill Hanks is the Aggies' leading returning tackler (111, including 15.0 for a loss); and junior safety Shamad Lomax, who forced eight turnovers last season, has moved from cornerback to safety. The secondary should get a boost from junior college transfer Ray Buford Jr., a cornerback who began his career at Minnesota.

SPECIALISTS Huntley emerged as a weapon in the kickoff return game, returning two kicks for TDs, including a go-ahead score early in NMSU's win over Utah State in the Arizona Bowl. The Aggies have two experienced placekickers in Dylan Brown and Parker Davidson. Brown converted 13-of-17 field goals last year, and Payton Theisler averaged a respectable 41.5 yards per punt in 2017.

FINAL ANALYSIS In its final year in the Sun Belt, New Mexico State ended the nation's longest bowl drought at 57 years with a thrilling overtime victory over Utah State in the Arizona Bowl. The Aggies begin play as an FBS independent in 2018, but the schedule is not daunting, with two games against fellow independent Liberty and matchups with familiar Sun Belt teams Louisiana, Texas State and Georgia Southern.

If NMSU receives quality play at quarterback and the defense takes another step forward, the Aggies have a realistic opportunity to enjoy a second straight winning season — something that hasn't happened since the late 1960s.



TERRILL HANKS

"What a great season for that program. Finally made it to a bowl game — and won it. But they lost a lot of players. Will be tough for them this year."

— An opposing assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (6)

WR	13	**Johnathan Boone (Sr.)**		Caleb Mills (So.)
WR	2	**OJ Clark (Sr.)**	10	Izaiah Lottie (Jr.)
WR	9	Drew Dan (Jr.)	21	Anthony Muse (Jr.)
LT	76	**Sage Doxtater (Jr.)**	51	Kris'Sean Edwards (Jr.)
LG	78	**Brian Trujillo (Jr.)**		Austin Young (Fr.)
C	74	**Jamin Smith (Sr.)**	69	Billy Sharmoug (Sr.)
RG	77	**Isaac McClain (Sr.)**		Isaiah Mursalat (Fr.)
RT		Eric Pulliam (Jr.)	55	Sebastian Anderson (Jr.)
TE	87	Bryce Roberts (So.)	88	Xander Yarberough (So.)
QB	12	Nick Jeanty (Sr.)		Matthew Romero (Jr.)
RB	1	Jason Huntley (Jr.)	26	Royce Caldwell (Sr.)

DEFENSE (7)

DE	10	**Cedric Wilcots II (Jr.)**	35	Matthew Young (So.)
NT	99	**Myles Vigne (So.)**	48	Marcus Buckley (So.)
DE	51	**Roy Lopez (Jr.)**	8	Jassavia Reese (Sr.)
OLB	28	Shane Jackson (Jr.)	11	Malik Demby (Sr.)
ILB	7	Javahn Fergurson (Sr.)	49	Lui Fa'amasino (Sr.)
ILB	41	Leon McQuaker (Sr.)	43	Billy Nipp (Sr.)
OLB	2	**Terrill Hanks (Sr.)**	20	Jonathan Hood (Sr.)
CB	4	**DeMarcus Owens (Sr.)**	29	Jared Phipps (Jr.)
CB		Ray Buford Jr. (Jr.)	5	Komotay Koffie (Jr.)
SS	22	**Shamad Lomax (Jr.)**	19	Austin Perkins (Jr.)
FS	23	**Ron LaForce (Sr.)**	14	Nakota Shepard-Creer (Jr.)

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	18	Dylan Brown (Jr.)	KR	1	Jason Huntley (Jr)
P	16	Payton Theisler (Jr.)	PR	2	OJ Clark (Sr.)

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Nick Jeanty, 72-48-389-4, 1 TD
Rushing: Jason Huntley, 70 att., 420 yds., 1 TD
Receiving: OJ Clark, 47 rec., 500 yds., 3 TDs
Tackles: Terrill Hanks, 111
Sacks: Cedric Wilcots II, 8.5
Interceptions: Shamad Lomax, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Doug Martin
Record at School: 17-44 (5 years)
Career Record: 46-97 (12 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Doug Martin
Defensive Coordinator: Frank Spaziani
Las Cruces, NM • Aggie Memorial Stadium (28,853)

Jason Getz/New Mexico State Athletics

Notre Dame **Fighting Irish**

National Forecast: **15** • Projected Record: **9-3**

2018 SCHEDULE

Sept.	1	Michigan
Sept.	8	Ball State
Sept.	15	Vanderbilt
Sept.	22	at Wake Forest
Sept.	29	Stanford
Oct.	6	at Virginia Tech
Oct.	13	Pittsburgh
Oct.	27	vs. Navy #
Nov.	3	at Northwestern
Nov.	10	Florida State
Nov.	17	vs. Syracuse %
Nov.	24	at USC

#San Diego %Bronx, NY

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 10-3

Sept.	2	Temple	W	49-16
Sept.	9	Georgia	L	19-20
Sept.	16	at Boston College	W	49-20
Sept.	23	at Michigan State	W	38-18
Sept.	30	Miami (Ohio)	W	52-17
Oct.	7	at North Carolina	W	33-10
Oct.	21	USC	W	49-14
Oct.	28	NC State	W	35-14
Nov.	4	Wake Forest	W	48-37
Nov.	11	at Miami	L	8-41
Nov.	18	Navy	W	24-17
Nov.	25	at Stanford	L	20-38
Jan.	1	vs. LSU #	W	21-17

#Citrus Bowl

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Houston Griffith, CB, Chicago, IL
2. Kevin Austin, WR, Ft. Lauderdale, FL
3. Phil Jurkovec, QB, Pittsburgh, PA
4. Shayne Simon, OLB, West Orange, NJ
5. Jack Lamb, ILB, Temecula, CA
6. Derrik Allen, S, Marietta, GA
7. Jayson Ademilola, DT, Jackson, NJ
8. Braden Lenzy, WR, Tigard, OR
9. George Takacs, TE, Naples, FL
10. Lawrence Keys III, WR, New Orleans,LA

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	NATIONAL
Scoring	34.2 ppg	24
Rushing	269.3 ypg	7
Passing	178.9 ypg	103
Total	448.2 ypg	27
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	21.5 ppg	31
Rushing	154.5 ypg	51
Passing	214.7 ypg	53
Total	369.2 ypg	46
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**NATIONAL**
+3	+0.23	46

STAT CORNER

20

Notre Dame allowed 20 points or fewer in 10 of its 13 games in 2017. It allowed 20 or fewer only four times in 2016.

OFFENSE Notre Dame's No. 7 rushing offense in 2017 took a significant hit on two fronts — running back Josh Adams (1,430 yards) bypassed his senior year, and two of the nation's top offensive linemen, Quenton Nelson and Mike McGlinchey, are off to the NFL as well.

The pressure is on quarterback Brandon Wimbush, who helped lead the Irish to spectacular results in the red zone (76 percent touchdown rate) but struggled mightily with his accuracy (49.5 percent). Those hiccups carried into the Citrus Bowl, where backup Ian Book saved the day with a pair of fourth-quarter TD passes. Highly touted freshman Phil Jurkovec, a dual threat, will get a look as well in the fall.

Speedy Dexter Williams is the heir apparent at running back, but injuries and the failure to master the playbook have limited him. Tony Jones Jr., also bothered by injuries in '17, is adept at catching the ball coming out of the backfield.

The Irish must break in some new go-to receivers following the departures of Equanimeous St. Brown and Kevin Stepherson. Miles Boykin, on the receiving end of Book's Citrus Bowl heroics, headlines the group with Chase Claypool. Both are bigger receivers, while Chris Finke and Michael Young add some dash. Tight ends Alizé Mack and Cole Kmet could be one of the nation's top pass-catching tandems at the position.

The offensive line, sans Nelson and McGlinchey, remains solid with veteran center Sam Mustipher and right guard Alex Bars. The Irish will benefit from Tommy Kraemer and Robert Hainsey splitting time at right tackle in '17, essentially bringing back four starters.

DEFENSE A year ago, new coordinator Mike Elko was faced with few clear-cut answers. After Elko's hugely successful rebuild, he accepted the Texas A&M coordinator's job. His protégé — linebackers coach Clark Lea — was tabbed to maintain continuity. Lea is the beneficiary of nine returning starters, led by cornerbacks Julian Love and Shaun Crawford, linebackers Te'von Coney and Drue Tranquill, and a deep and experienced defensive line led by tackle Jerry Tillery.

Concerns remain on the back end of the defense as none of the safeties — all of whom are returning — recorded an interception last year. Navy transfer Alohi Gilman could man one of the spots after sitting out the '17 season. Incumbent Nick Coleman will play a role at safety and/or nickel. Juniors Jalen Elliott and Devin Studstill, sophomore Jordan Genmark Heath and freshman Houston Griffith all have a shot.

SPECIALISTS Entering their fourth years as starters, placekicker Justin Yoon and punter Tyler Newsome form one of the nation's most experienced tandems. Yoon is 42-of-52 on field goals. Newsome (43.8-yard career average) has a cannon, although he's prone to inconsistency. The Irish will break in a new kick returner. Finke, who averaged just 6.5 yards per his 24 punt returns, is sure-handed and elusive.

FINAL ANALYSIS Notre Dame is aiming for its first back-to-back double-digit-winning seasons since Lou Holtz was head coach in 1992-93. Winners of 10 games in two of the last three years, the Fighting Irish remain a difficult read, due largely to the ugly 4–8 season in 2016. It begs the question: Was last year's September-October run for a Playoff berth a more accurate depiction of Notre Dame moving forward, or does the collapse in November at Miami and Stanford say more about the up-and-down Brian Kelly regime?



TE'VON CONEY

"I still think Brandon Wimbush is the answer at QB. I know (Ian) Book won that bowl game, but Wimbush does more things that can stress a defense."

— An opposing assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (5)

WR	81	Miles Boykin (Jr.)	88	Javon McKinley (So.)
WR	**83**	**Chase Claypool (Jr.)**	8	Jafar Armstrong (Fr.)
WR	87	Michael Young (So.)	10	Chris Finke (Jr.)
LT	74	Liam Eichenberg (So.)	69	Aaron Banks (Fr.)
LG	**78**	**Tommy Kraemer (So.)**	75	Josh Lugg (Fr.)
C	**53**	**Sam Mustipher (Sr.)**	57	Trevor Ruhland (Jr.)
RG	**71**	**Alex Bars (Sr.)**	76	Dillan Gibbons (Fr.)
RT	72	Robert Hainsey (So.)	69	Aaron Banks (Fr.)
TE	86	Alizé Mack (Jr.)	84	Cole Kmet (So.)
QB	**7**	**Brandon Wimbush (Jr.)**	12	Ian Book (So.)
RB	2	Dexter Williams (Sr.)	6	Tony Jones Jr. (So.)

DEFENSE (9)

DE	53	Khalid Kareem (Jr.)	91	Ade Ogundeji (So.)
DT	**99**	**Jerry Tillery (Sr.)**	95	Myron Tagovailoa-Amosa (So.)
NT	**55**	**Jonathan Bonner (Sr.)**	41	Kurt Hinish (So.)
DE	**9**	**Daelin Hayes (Jr.)**	42	Julian Okwara (Jr.)
SLB	22	Asmar Bilal (Jr.)	17	Isaiah Robertson (So.)
MLB	**4**	**Te'von Coney (Sr.)**	45	Jonathan Jones (So.)
WLB	**23**	**Drue Tranquill (Sr.)**	45	Jonathan Jones (So.)
CB	20	Shaun Crawford (Jr.)	5	Troy Pride Jr. (Jr.)
CB	**27**	**Julian Love (Jr.)**	**7**	**Nick Watkins (Sr.)**
FS	**24**	**Nick Coleman (Sr.)**	14	Devin Studstill (Jr.)
SS	11	Alohi Gilman (So.)	**21**	**Jalen Elliott (Jr.)**

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	19	Justin Yoon (Sr.)	**KR**	87	Michael Young (So.)
P	85	Tyler Newsome (Sr.)	**PR**	10	Chris Finke (Jr.)

***Returning Starters in Bold**

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Brandon Wimbush, 275-136-1,870-6, 16 TDs
Rushing: Brandon Wimbush, 141 att., 803 yds., 14 TDs
Receiving: Chase Claypool, 29 rec., 402 yds., 2 TDs
Tackles: Te'von Coney, 116
Sacks: Jerry Tillery, 4.5
Interceptions: Julian Love, 3

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Brian Kelly
Record at School: 69-34 (8 years)
Career Record: 240-91-2 (28 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Chip Long
Defensive Coordinator: Clark Lea
South Bend, IN • Notre Dame Stadium (77,622)

Tom Lynn

UMass **Minutemen**

National Forecast: **107** • Projected Record: **5-7**

2018 SCHEDULE

Aug.	25	Duquesne
Sept.	1	at Boston College
Sept.	8	at Georgia Southern
Sept.	15	at FIU
Sept.	22	Charlotte
Sept.	29	at Ohio
Oct.	6	South Florida
Oct.	20	Coastal Carolina
Oct.	27	at Connecticut
Nov.	3	Liberty
Nov.	10	vs BYU #
Nov.	17	at Georgia

#Foxboro, MA

2017 RESULTS

RECORD: 4-8

Aug.	26	Hawaii	L	35-38
Sept.	2	at Coastal Carolina	L	28-38
Sept.	9	Old Dominion	L	7-17
Sept.	15	at Temple	L	21-29
Sept.	23	at Tennessee	L	13-17
Sept.	30	Ohio	L	50-58
Oct.	21	Georgia Southern	W	55-20
Oct.	28	Appalachian State (ot)	W	30-27
Nov.	4	at Mississippi State	L	23-34
Nov.	11	vs. Maine #	W	44-31
Nov.	18	at BYU	W	16-10
Dec.	2	at FIU	L	45-63

#Boston

TOP 10 RECRUITS

1. Joshua Jefferson, C, Washington, DC
2. Uchenna Ezewike, DE, Fort Lauderdale, FL
3. Jaret Pallotta, QB, Massillon, OH
4. Arnold Mbembe, DE, Montreal, QC
5. Dennis Osagiede, DT, Missouri City, TX
6. Samuel Emilus, WR, Montreal, QC
7. Josiah Johnson, QB, Jacksonville, FL
8. Parker Ogle, C, Palm Beach Gardens, FL
9. Elijah Johnson, CB, East Longmeadow, MA
10. Timothy Moulton, DT, Philadelphia, PA

2017 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	NATIONAL
Scoring	30.6 ppg	47
Rushing	135.3 ypg	100
Passing	297.5 ypg	17
Total	432.8 ypg	35
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**NATIONAL**
Scoring	31.8 ppg	94
Rushing	197.9 ypg	100
Passing	207.0 ypg	42
Total	404.9 ypg	75
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**NATIONAL**
+3	+0.25	45

STAT CORNER

4

During an 0-6 start in 2017, UMass lost four games by a single score. A 4-8 record could have easily been 6-6 or better.

OFFENSE Quarterback Andrew Ford leads a unit that returns eight starters and several key reserves. Ford, a senior pocket passer who began his career at Virginia Tech, threw 22 touchdowns and just four interceptions last year while averaging 265.8 yards per game. He'll be working behind an offensive line that returns everyone on last year's two deep.

The Minutemen will miss tight end Adam Breneman (64 catches, 764 yards, four TDs), an NFL prospect before a knee injury ended his professional hopes, but UMass returns several wide receivers who contributed in 2017. Senior speedster Andy Isabella led the Minutemen with 65 catches for 1,020 yards and 10 TDs as a junior. Sophomores Jessie Britt (29 catches, 422 yards) and Brennon Dingle (21 catches, 330 yards), both of whom showed star potential last year, should see more passes thrown their way this season.

Running back Marquis Young (982 yards, nine TDs), who has led the Minutemen in rushing each of the last three seasons, will have some help. Syracuse transfer Jordan Fredericks, who led the Orange with 607 rushing yards as a freshman in 2015, gives UMass a more physical back to compliment Young's speed.

DEFENSE It took the Minutemen longer than they'd hoped to get comfortable in new defensive coordinator Ed Pinkham's system last year, but UMass was much better on that side of the ball in the second half of the season. The Minutemen will try to carry that late momentum into 2018.

After considering skipping his final season, middle linebacker Bryton Barr opted to return as a rare seventh-year senior. He was granted three additional years of eligibility after missing most of 2013 and all of 2014 and 2015 with injuries while at Towson. Year six was the best of his career as he led UMass with 105 tackles.

Sophomore Cole McCubrey, who looked promising in limited snaps, will start on the outside, while senior Jarell Addo resumes his hybrid linebacker/safety role.

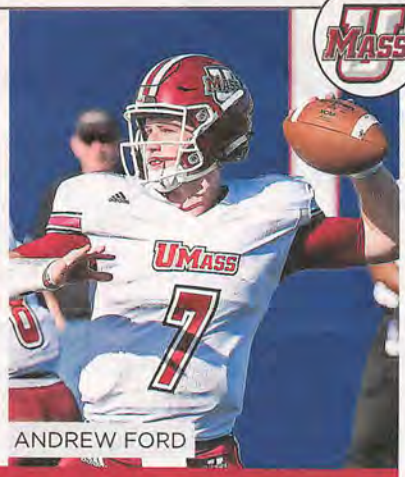
The defensive line will be the biggest question mark with three new starters and limited depth. How quickly that group comes together could set the tone for the entire unit. Getting to the quarterback could be a challenge as well. Of the 23 sacks UMass had in 2017, 15.5 of them came from players who graduated.

Cornerback should be a strength as junior Isaiah Rodgers (three interceptions, 14 pass breakups, two forced fumbles, two recoveries) is back after a breakthrough sophomore season. Senior Lee Moses (four interceptions) is a steady presence on the other side.

UConn graduate transfer Brice McAllister will likely start right away at strong safety with senior Tyler Hayes returning at free safety.

SPECIALISTS The loss of reliable senior Logan Laurent, who handled field goals, extra points and punts, will leave the Minutemen breaking in two new specialists. Junior college kicker Cooper Garcia will likely get first crack at placekicking, while incoming freshman George Georgopoulos will be the team's No. 1 punter. Rodgers, Isabella, Britt and occasionally Young will each likely see regular return duties.

FINAL ANALYSIS After starting 0–6, the Minutemen won four of their last six games last year. With an experienced roster and winnable games on the schedule, bowl eligibility is a more reachable goal than it's been since UMass became an FBS program in 2012. But to get in a bowl without a conference, they'll have to hope that a conference fails to fill its slots.



ANDREW FORD

"They probably deserved to win more than four games last year. A lot of close losses. (QB Andrew) Ford did some good things for them."

— An opposing assistant coach

DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE (8)					
WR	23	**Andy Isabella (Sr.)**	10	Brennon Dingle (So.)	
WR	6	**Sadiq Palmer (Jr.)**	15	Jacoby Herring (Sr.)	
WR	5	Jessie Britt (So.)	88	Jyvon "Silky" Brown (So.)	
LT	57	**Ray Thomas-Ishman (Jr.)**	55	James Reilly (So.)	
LG	79	**Jake Largay (Sr.)**	50	Mike Yerardi (Jr.)	
C	72	**Derek Dumais (Jr.)**	74	Lukas Kolter (Sr.)	
RG	74	**Lukas Kolter (Sr.)**	67	Dan DiNicola (Sr.)	
RT	59	Larnell Coleman (So.)	53	Parker Ogle (Fr.)	
TE	85	Kyle Horn (Jr.)	87	Travis Reynolds (Jr.)	
QB	7	**Andrew Ford (Sr.)**	2	Ross Comis (Sr.)	
RB	8	**Marquis Young (Sr.)**	20	Jordan Fredericks (Jr.)	
DEFENSE (6)					
DE	97	Jake Byczko (So.)	91	Alex Piechocki (So.)	
DT	73	Chris DiTomasso (Fr.)	94	Charly Timite (So.)	
DT	61	**Joe Previte (Sr.)**	96	Mario Patton (Jr.)	
DE	54	Leon Flanagan (Jr.)	92	Caeleb Washington (Fr.)	
OLB	46	Cole McCubrey (So.)	33	Mike Ruane (So.)	
MLB	44	**Bryton Barr (Sr.)**	17	Chinedu Ogbonna (So.)	
OLB	26	**Jarell Addo (Sr.)**	21	Tyshaun Ingram (Jr.)	
CB	3	**Lee Moses (Sr.)**	25	Chris Hunt (Fr.)	
CB	9	**Isaiah Rodgers (Jr.)**	43	Brian Roberts (Fr.)	
S	2	Brice McAllister (Sr.)	32	Tyris Lebeau (So.)	
S	30	**Tyler Hayes (Sr.)**	14	Bakhari Goodson (Jr.)	
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K		Cooper Garcia (Jr.)	**KR**	23 Andy Isabella (Sr.)	
P		George Georgopoulos (Fr.)	**PR**	9 Isaiah Rodgers (Jr.)	

Returning Starters in Bold

RETURNING LEADERS

Passing: Andrew Ford, 353-223-2,924-4, 22 TDs
Rushing: Marquis Young, 182 att., 982 yds., 9 TDs
Receiving: Andy Isabella, 65 rec., 1,020 yds, 10 TDs
Tackles: Bryton Barr, 105
Sacks: Bryton Barr, 5.0
Interceptions: Lee Moses, 4

TEAM INFORMATION

Head Coach: Mark Whipple
Record at School: 61-62 (10 years)
Career Record: 133-95 (20 years)
Offensive Coordinator: Mark Whipple
Defensive Coordinator: Ed Pinkham
Amherst, MA • McGuirk Alumni Stadium (17,000)

AP

2018 FBS Schedules


Clemson


South Florida

ACC

BOSTON COLLEGE (7-6, 4-4)
Chestnut Hill, MA
Sept. 1 Massachusetts
Sept. 8 Holy Cross
Sept. 13 at Wake Forest
Sept. 22 at Purdue
Sept. 29 Temple
Oct. 6 at NC State
Oct. 13 Louisville
Oct. 26 Miami
Nov. 3 at Virginia Tech
Nov. 10 Clemson
Nov. 17 at Florida State
Nov. 24 Syracuse

CLEMSON (12-2, 8-1)
Clemson, SC
Sept. 1 Furman
Sept. 8 at Texas A&M
Sept. 15 Georgia Southern
Sept. 22 at Georgia Tech
Sept. 29 Syracuse
Oct. 6 at Wake Forest
Oct. 20 NC State
Oct. 27 at Florida State
Nov. 3 Louisville
Nov. 10 at Boston College
Nov. 17 Duke
Nov. 24 South Carolina

DUKE (7-6, 3-5)
Durham, NC
Sept. 1 Army
Sept. 8 at Northwestern
Sept. 15 at Baylor
Sept. 22 NC Central
Sept. 29 Virginia Tech
Oct. 13 at Georgia Tech
Oct. 20 Virginia
Oct. 27 at Pittsburgh
Nov. 3 at Miami
Nov. 10 North Carolina
Nov. 17 at Clemson
Nov. 24 Wake Forest

FLORIDA STATE (7-6, 3-5)
Tallahassee, FL
Sept. 3 Virginia Tech
Sept. 8 Samford
Sept. 15 at Syracuse
Sept. 22 Northern Illinois
Sept. 29 at Louisville
Oct. 6 at Miami
Oct. 20 Wake Forest
Oct. 27 Clemson
Nov. 3 at NC State
Nov. 10 at Notre Dame
Nov. 17 Boston College
Nov. 24 Florida

GEORGIA TECH (5-6, 4-4)
Atlanta, GA
Sept. 1 Alcorn State
Sept. 8 at South Florida
Sept. 15 at Pittsburgh
Sept. 22 Clemson
Sept. 29 Bowling Green
Oct. 5 at Louisville
Oct. 13 Duke
Oct. 25 at Virginia Tech
Nov. 3 at North Carolina
Nov. 10 Miami
Nov. 17 Virginia
Nov. 24 at Georgia

LOUISVILLE (8-5, 4-4)
Louisville, KY
Sept. 1 vs. Alabama #
Sept. 8 Indiana State
Sept. 15 Western Kentucky
Sept. 22 at Virginia
Sept. 29 Florida State
Oct. 5 Georgia Tech
Oct. 13 at Boston College
Oct. 27 Wake Forest
Nov. 3 at Clemson
Nov. 9 at Syracuse
Nov. 17 NC State
Nov. 24 Kentucky
#Orlando, FL

MIAMI (10-3, 7-1)
Coral Gables, FL
Sept. 2 vs. LSU #
Sept. 8 Savannah State
Sept. 15 at Toledo
Sept. 22 FIU
Sept. 27 North Carolina
Oct. 6 Florida State
Oct. 13 at Virginia
Oct. 26 at Boston College
Nov. 3 Duke
Nov. 10 at Georgia Tech
Nov. 17 at Virginia Tech
Nov. 24 Pittsburgh
#Arlington, TX

NORTH CAROLINA (3-9, 1-7)
Chapel Hill, NC
Sept. 1 at California
Sept. 8 at East Carolina
Sept. 15 UCF
Sept. 22 Pittsburgh
Sept. 27 at Miami
Oct. 13 Virginia Tech
Oct. 20 at Syracuse
Oct. 27 at Virginia
Nov. 3 Georgia Tech
Nov. 10 at Duke
Nov. 17 Western Carolina
Nov. 24 NC State

NC STATE (9-4, 6-2)
Raleigh, NC
Sept. 1 James Madison
Sept. 8 Georgia State
Sept. 15 West Virginia
Sept. 22 at Marshall
Sept. 29 Virginia
Oct. 6 Boston College
Oct. 20 at Clemson
Oct. 27 at Syracuse
Nov. 3 Florida State
Nov. 8 Wake Forest
Nov. 17 at Louisville
Nov. 24 at North Carolina

PITTSBURGH (5-7, 3-5)
Pittsburgh, PA
Sept. 1 Albany
Sept. 8 Penn State
Sept. 15 Georgia Tech
Sept. 22 at North Carolina
Sept. 29 at UCF
Oct. 6 Syracuse
Oct. 13 at Notre Dame
Oct. 27 Duke
Nov. 2 at Virginia
Nov. 10 Virginia Tech
Nov. 17 at Wake Forest
Nov. 24 at Miami

SYRACUSE (4-8, 2-6)
Syracuse, NY
Sept. 1 at Western Michigan
Sept. 8 Wagner
Sept. 15 Florida State
Sept. 22 Connecticut
Sept. 29 at Clemson
Oct. 6 at Pittsburgh
Oct. 20 North Carolina
Oct. 27 NC State
Nov. 3 at Wake Forest
Nov. 9 Louisville
Nov. 17 vs. Notre Dame #
Nov. 24 at Boston College
#Bronx, NY

VIRGINIA (6-7, 3-5)
Charlottesville, VA
Sept. 1 Richmond
Sept. 8 at Indiana
Sept. 15 Ohio
Sept. 22 Louisville
Sept. 29 at NC State
Oct. 13 Miami
Oct. 20 at Duke
Oct. 27 North Carolina
Nov. 2 Pittsburgh
Nov. 10 Liberty
Nov. 17 at Georgia Tech
Nov. 23 at Virginia Tech

VIRGINIA TECH (9-4, 5-3)
Blacksburg, VA
Sept. 3 at Florida State
Sept. 8 William & Mary
Sept. 15 East Carolina
Sept. 22 at Old Dominion
Sept. 29 at Duke
Oct. 6 Notre Dame
Oct. 13 at North Carolina
Oct. 25 Georgia Tech
Nov. 3 Boston College
Nov. 10 at Pittsburgh
Nov. 17 Miami
Nov. 23 Virginia

WAKE FOREST (8-5, 4-4)
Winston-Salem, NC
Aug. 30 at Tulane
Sept. 8 Towson
Sept. 13 Boston College
Sept. 22 Notre Dame
Sept. 29 Rice
Oct. 6 Clemson
Oct. 20 at Florida State
Oct. 27 at Louisville
Nov. 3 Syracuse
Nov. 8 at NC State
Nov. 17 Pittsburgh
Nov. 24 at Duke

AMERICAN

CINCINNATI (4-8, 2-6)
Cincinnati, OH
Sept. 1 at UCLA
Sept. 8 Miami (Ohio) #
Sept. 15 Alabama A&M
Sept. 22 Ohio
Sept. 29 at Connecticut
Oct. 6 Tulane
Oct. 20 at Temple
Oct. 27 at SMU
Nov. 3 Navy
Nov. 10 South Florida
Nov. 17 at UCF
Nov. 23 East Carolina
#Paul Brown Stadium

CONNECTICUT (3-9, 2-6)
Storrs, CT
Aug. 30 UCF
Sept. 8 at Boise State
Sept. 15 Rhode Island
Sept. 22 at Syracuse
Sept. 29 Cincinnati
Oct. 6 at Memphis
Oct. 20 at South Florida
Oct. 27 Massachusetts
Nov. 3 at Tulsa
Nov. 10 SMU
Nov. 17 at East Carolina
Nov. 24 Temple

EAST CAROLINA (3-9, 2-6)
Greenville, NC
Sept. 1 North Carolina A&T
Sept. 8 North Carolina
Sept. 15 at Virginia Tech
Sept. 22 at South Florida
Sept. 29 Old Dominion
Oct. 6 at Temple
Oct. 13 Houston
Oct. 20 UCF
Nov. 3 Memphis
Nov. 10 at Tulane
Nov. 17 Connecticut
Nov. 23 at Cincinnati

HOUSTON (7-5, 5-3)
Houston, TX
Sept. 1 at Rice
Sept. 8 Arizona
Sept. 15 at Texas Tech
Sept. 22 Texas Southern
Oct. 4 Tulsa
Oct. 13 at East Carolina
Oct. 20 at Navy
Oct. 27 South Florida
Nov. 3 at SMU
Nov. 10 Temple
Nov. 15 Tulane
Nov. 23 at Memphis

MEMPHIS (10-3, 7-1)
Memphis, TN
Sept. 1 Mercer
Sept. 8 at Navy
Sept. 14 Georgia State
Sept. 22 South Alabama
Sept. 28 at Tulane
Oct. 6 Connecticut
Oct. 13 UCF
Oct. 20 at Missouri
Nov. 3 at East Carolina
Nov. 10 Tulsa
Nov. 16 at SMU
Nov. 23 Houston

NAVY (7-6, 4-4)
Annapolis, MD
Sept. 1 at Hawaii
Sept. 8 Memphis
Sept. 15 Lehigh
Sept. 22 at SMU
Oct. 6 at Air Force
Oct. 13 Temple
Oct. 20 Houston
Oct. 27 vs. Notre Dame #
Nov. 3 at Cincinnati
Nov. 10 at UCF
Nov. 17 Tulsa
Nov. 24 at Tulane
Dec. 8 vs. Army %
#San Diego, CA
%Philadelphia, PA

SOUTH FLORIDA (10-2, 6-2)
Tampa, FL
Sept. 1 Elon
Sept. 8 Georgia Tech
Sept. 15 vs. Illinois #
Sept. 22 East Carolina
Oct. 6 at Massachusetts
Oct. 12 at Tulsa
Oct. 20 Connecticut
Oct. 27 at Houston
Nov. 3 Tulane
Nov. 10 at Cincinnati
Nov. 17 at Temple
Nov. 23 UCF
#Chicago, IL

SMU (7-6, 4-4)
Dallas, TX
Sept. 1 at North Texas
Sept. 7 TCU
Sept. 15 at Michigan
Sept. 22 Navy
Sept. 29 Houston Baptist
Oct. 6 at UCF
Oct. 20 at Tulane
Oct. 27 Cincinnati
Nov. 3 Houston
Nov. 10 at Connecticut
Nov. 16 Memphis
Nov. 24 at Tulsa

Clemson: Paul Abell; Tulane: Parker Waters/Tulane Athletics; Penn State: Peter Brouillet; Michigan: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Ohio State: Tom Lynn; South Florida: USF Athletics


Tulane


Penn State


Michigan


Ohio State

TEMPLE (7-6, 4-4)
Philadelphia, PA
Sept. 1 Villanova
Sept. 8 Buffalo
Sept. 15 at Maryland
Sept. 20 Tulsa
Sept. 29 at Boston College
Oct. 6 East Carolina
Oct. 13 at Navy
Oct. 20 Cincinnati
Nov. 1 at UCF
Nov. 10 at Houston
Nov. 17 South Florida
Nov. 24 at Connecticut

TULANE (5-7, 3-5)
New Orleans, LA
Aug. 30 Wake Forest
Sept. 8 Nicholls
Sept. 15 at UAB
Sept. 22 at Ohio State
Sept. 28 Memphis
Oct. 6 at Cincinnati
Oct. 20 SMU
Oct. 27 at Tulsa
Nov. 3 at South Florida
Nov. 10 East Carolina
Nov. 15 at Houston
Nov. 24 Navy

TULSA (2-10, 1-7)
Tulsa, OK
Sept. 1 Central Arkansas
Sept. 8 at Texas
Sept. 15 Arkansas State
Sept. 20 at Temple
Oct. 4 at Houston
Oct. 12 South Florida
Oct. 20 at Arkansas
Oct. 27 Tulane
Nov. 3 Connecticut
Nov. 10 at Memphis
Nov. 17 at Navy
Nov. 24 SMU

UCF (13-0, 8-0)
Orlando, FL
Aug. 30 at Connecticut
Sept. 8 South Carolina State
Sept. 15 at North Carolina
Sept. 21 Florida Atlantic
Sept. 29 Pittsburgh
Oct. 6 SMU
Oct. 13 at Memphis
Oct. 20 at East Carolina
Nov. 1 Temple
Nov. 10 Navy
Nov. 17 Cincinnati
Nov. 23 at South Florida

BIG TEN

ILLINOIS (2-10, 0-9)
Champaign, IL
Sept. 1 Kent State
Sept. 8 Western Illinois
Sept. 15 vs. South Florida #
Sept. 21 Penn State
Oct. 6 at Rutgers
Oct. 13 Purdue
Oct. 20 at Wisconsin
Oct. 27 at Maryland
Nov. 3 Minnesota
Nov. 10 at Nebraska
Nov. 17 Iowa
Nov. 24 Northwestern
#Chicago, IL

INDIANA (5-7, 2-7)
Bloomington, IN
Sept. 1 at FIU
Sept. 8 Virginia
Sept. 15 Ball State
Sept. 22 Michigan State
Sept. 29 at Rutgers
Oct. 6 at Ohio State
Oct. 13 Iowa
Oct. 20 Penn State
Oct. 26 at Minnesota
Nov. 10 Maryland
Nov. 17 at Michigan
Nov. 24 Purdue

IOWA (8-5, 4-5)
Iowa City, IA
Sept. 1 Northern Illinois
Sept. 8 Iowa State
Sept. 15 Northern Iowa
Sept. 22 Wisconsin
Oct. 6 at Minnesota
Oct. 13 at Indiana
Oct. 20 Maryland
Oct. 27 at Penn State
Nov. 3 at Purdue
Nov. 10 Northwestern
Nov. 17 at Illinois
Nov. 23 Nebraska

MARYLAND (4-8, 2-7)
College Park, MD
Sept. 1 vs. Texas #
Sept. 8 at Bowling Green
Sept. 15 Temple
Sept. 22 Minnesota
Oct. 6 at Michigan
Oct. 13 Rutgers
Oct. 20 at Iowa
Oct. 27 Illinois
Nov. 3 Michigan State
Nov. 10 at Indiana
Nov. 17 Ohio State
Nov. 24 at Penn State
#Landover, MD

MICHIGAN (8-5, 5-4)
Ann Arbor, MI
Sept. 1 at Notre Dame
Sept. 8 Western Michigan
Sept. 15 SMU
Sept. 22 Nebraska
Sept. 29 at Northwestern
Oct. 6 Maryland
Oct. 13 Wisconsin
Oct. 20 at Michigan State
Nov. 3 Penn State
Nov. 10 at Rutgers
Nov. 17 Indiana
Nov. 24 at Ohio State

MICHIGAN STATE (10-3, 7-2)
East Lansing, MI
Aug. 31 Utah State
Sept. 8 at Arizona State
Sept. 22 at Indiana
Sept. 29 Central Michigan
Oct. 6 Northwestern
Oct. 13 at Penn State
Oct. 20 Michigan
Oct. 27 Purdue
Nov. 3 at Maryland
Nov. 10 Ohio State
Nov. 17 at Nebraska
Nov. 24 Rutgers

MINNESOTA (5-7, 2-7)
Minneapolis, MN
Aug. 30 New Mexico State
Sept. 8 Fresno State
Sept. 15 Miami (Ohio)
Sept. 22 at Maryland
Oct. 6 Iowa
Oct. 13 at Ohio State
Oct. 20 at Nebraska
Oct. 26 Indiana
Nov. 3 at Illinois
Nov. 10 Purdue
Nov. 17 Northwestern
Nov. 24 at Wisconsin

NEBRASKA (4-8, 3-6)
Lincoln, NE
Sept. 1 Akron
Sept. 8 Colorado
Sept. 15 Troy
Sept. 22 at Michigan
Sept. 29 Purdue
Oct. 6 at Wisconsin
Oct. 13 at Northwestern
Oct. 20 Minnesota
Nov. 3 at Ohio State
Nov. 10 Illinois
Nov. 17 Michigan State
Nov. 23 at Iowa

NORTHWESTERN (10-3, 7-2)
Evanston, IL
Aug. 30 at Purdue
Sept. 8 Duke
Sept. 15 Akron
Sept. 29 Michigan
Oct. 6 at Michigan State
Oct. 13 Nebraska
Oct. 20 at Rutgers
Oct. 27 Wisconsin
Nov. 3 Notre Dame
Nov. 10 at Iowa
Nov. 17 at Minnesota
Nov. 24 at Illinois

OHIO STATE (12-2, 8-1)
Columbus, OH
Sept. 1 Oregon State
Sept. 8 Rutgers
Sept. 15 vs. TCU #
Sept. 22 Tulane
Sept. 29 at Penn State
Oct. 6 Indiana
Oct. 13 Minnesota
Oct. 20 at Purdue
Nov. 3 Nebraska
Nov. 10 at Michigan State
Nov. 17 at Maryland
Nov. 24 Michigan
#Arlington, TX

PENN STATE (11-2, 6-2)
University Park, PA
Sept. 1 Appalachian State
Sept. 8 at Pittsburgh
Sept. 15 Kent State
Sept. 21 at Illinois
Sept. 29 Ohio State
Oct. 13 Michigan State
Oct. 20 at Indiana
Oct. 27 Iowa
Nov. 3 at Michigan
Nov. 10 Wisconsin
Nov. 17 at Rutgers
Nov. 24 Maryland

PURDUE (7-6, 4-5)
West Lafayette, IN
Aug. 30 Northwestern
Sept. 8 Eastern Michigan
Sept. 15 Missouri
Sept. 22 Boston College
Sept. 29 at Nebraska
Oct. 13 at Illinois
Oct. 20 Ohio State
Oct. 27 at Michigan State
Nov. 3 Iowa
Nov. 10 at Minnesota
Nov. 17 Wisconsin
Nov. 24 at Indiana

RUTGERS (4-8, 3-6)
New Brunswick, NJ
Sept. 1 Texas State
Sept. 8 at Ohio State
Sept. 15 at Kansas
Sept. 22 Buffalo
Sept. 29 Indiana
Oct. 6 Illinois
Oct. 13 at Maryland
Oct. 20 Northwestern
Nov. 3 at Wisconsin
Nov. 10 Michigan
Nov. 17 Penn State
Nov. 24 at Michigan State

WISCONSIN (13-1, 9-0)
Madison, WI
Aug. 31 Western Kentucky
Sept. 8 New Mexico
Sept. 15 BYU
Sept. 22 at Iowa
Oct. 6 Nebraska
Oct. 13 at Michigan
Oct. 20 Illinois
Oct. 27 at Northwestern
Nov. 3 Rutgers
Nov. 10 at Penn State
Nov. 17 at Purdue
Nov. 24 Minnesota

BIG 12

BAYLOR (1-11, 1-8)
Waco, TX
Sept. 1 Abilene Christian
Sept. 8 at UTSA
Sept. 15 Duke
Sept. 22 Kansas
Sept. 29 at Oklahoma
Oct. 6 Kansas State
Oct. 13 at Texas
Oct. 25 at West Virginia
Nov. 3 Oklahoma State
Nov. 10 at Iowa State
Nov. 17 TCU
Nov. 24 vs. Texas Tech #
#Arlington, TX

IOWA STATE (8-5, 5-4)
Ames, IA
Sept. 1 South Dakota State
Sept. 8 at Iowa
Sept. 15 Oklahoma
Sept. 22 Akron
Sept. 29 at TCU
Oct. 6 at Oklahoma State
Oct. 13 West Virginia
Oct. 27 Texas Tech
Nov. 3 at Kansas
Nov. 10 Baylor
Nov. 17 at Texas
Nov. 24 Kansas State

2018 FBS Schedules


Oklahoma

KANSAS (1-11, 0-9)
Lawrence, KS
Sept. 1 Nicholls State
Sept. 8 at Central Michigan
Sept. 15 Rutgers
Sept. 22 at Baylor
Sept. 29 Oklahoma State
Oct. 6 at West Virginia
Oct. 20 at Texas Tech
Oct. 27 TCU
Nov. 3 Iowa State
Nov. 10 at Kansas State
Nov. 17 at Oklahoma
Nov. 23 Texas

KANSAS STATE (8-5, 5-4)
Manhattan, KS
Sept. 1 South Dakota
Sept. 8 Mississippi State
Sept. 15 UTSA
Sept. 22 at West Virginia
Sept. 29 Texas
Oct. 6 at Baylor
Oct. 13 Oklahoma State
Oct. 27 at Oklahoma
Nov. 3 at TCU
Nov. 10 Kansas
Nov. 17 Texas Tech
Nov. 24 at Iowa State

OKLAHOMA (12-2, 8-1)
Norman, OK
Sept. 1 Florida Atlantic
Sept. 8 UCLA
Sept.15 at Iowa State
Sept.22 Army
Sept.29 Baylor
Oct. 6 vs. Texas #
Oct. 20 at TCU
Oct. 27 Kansas State
Nov. 3 at Texas Tech
Nov. 10 Oklahoma State
Nov. 17 Kansas
Nov. 23 at West Virginia
#Dallas, TX

OKLAHOMA STATE (9-4, 5-4)
Stillwater, OK
Sept. 1 Missouri State
Sept. 8 South Alabama
Sept.15 Boise State
Sept.22 Texas Tech
Sept.29 at Kansas
Oct. 6 Iowa State
Oct. 13 at Kansas State
Oct. 27 Texas
Nov. 3 at Baylor
Nov. 10 at Oklahoma
Nov. 17 West Virginia
Nov. 24 at TCU

TEXAS (7-6, 5-4)
Austin, TX
Sept. 1 vs. Maryland #
Sept. 8 Tulsa
Sept.15 USC
Sept.22 TCU
Sept.29 at Kansas State
Oct. 6 vs Oklahoma %
Oct. 13 Baylor
Oct. 27 at Oklahoma State
Nov. 3 West Virginia
Nov. 10 at Texas Tech
Nov. 17 Iowa State
Nov. 23 at Kansas
#Landover, MD %Dallas, TX

TCU (11-3, 7-2)
Fort Worth, TX
Sept. 1 Southern
Sept. 7 at SMU
Sept.15 vs. Ohio State #
Sept.22 at Texas
Sept.29 Iowa State
Oct. 11 Texas Tech
Oct. 20 Oklahoma
Oct. 27 at Kansas
Nov. 3 Kansas State
Nov. 10 at West Virginia
Nov. 17 at Baylor
Nov. 24 Oklahoma State
#Arlington, TX

TEXAS TECH (6-7, 3-6)
Lubbock, TX
Sept. 1 vs. Ole Miss #
Sept. 8 Lamar
Sept.15 Houston
Sept.22 at Oklahoma State
Sept.29 West Virginia
Oct. 11 at TCU
Oct. 20 Kansas
Oct. 27 at Iowa State
Nov. 3 Oklahoma
Nov. 10 Texas
Nov. 17 at Kansas State
Nov. 24 vs. Baylor%
#Houston, TX %Arlington, TX

WEST VIRGINIA (7-6, 5-4)
Morgantown, WV
Sept. 1 vs Tennessee #
Sept. 8 Youngstown State
Sept.15 at NC State
Sept.22 Kansas State
Sept.29 at Texas Tech
Oct. 6 Kansas
Oct. 13 at Iowa State
Oct. 25 Baylor
Nov. 3 at Texas
Nov. 10 TCU
Nov. 17 at Oklahoma State
Nov. 23 Oklahoma
#Charlotte, NC

C-USA

CHARLOTTE (1-11, 1-7)
Charlotte, NC
Sept. 1 Fordham
Sept. 8 Appalachian State
Sept.15 Old Dominion
Sept.22 at Massachusetts
Sept.29 at UAB
Oct. 13 Western Kentucky
Oct. 20 at Middle Tennessee
Oct. 27 Southern Miss
Nov. 3 at Tennessee
Nov. 10 at Marshall
Nov. 17 FIU
Nov. 24 at Florida Atlantic

FIU (8-5, 5-3)
Miami, FL
Sept. 1 Indiana
Sept. 8 at Old Dominion
Sept.15 Massachusetts
Sept.22 at Miami
Sept.29 Arkansas-Pine Bluff
Oct. 13 Middle Tennessee
Oct. 20 Rice
Oct. 27 at Western Kentucky
Nov. 3 Florida Atlantic
Nov. 10 at UTSA
Nov. 17 at Charlotte
Nov. 24 Marshall

FLORIDA ATLANTIC (11-3, 8-0)
Boca Raton, FL
Sept. 1 at Oklahoma
Sept. 8 Air Force
Sept.15 Bethune-Cookman
Sept.22 at UCF
Sept.29 at Middle Tennessee
Oct. 6 Old Dominion
Oct. 20 at Marshall
Oct. 27 Louisiana Tech
Nov. 3 at FIU
Nov. 10 Western Kentucky
Nov. 17 at North Texas
Nov. 24 Charlotte

LOUISIANA TECH (7-6, 4-4)
Ruston, LA
Sept. 1 at South Alabama
Sept. 8 Southern
Sept.22 at LSU
Sept.29 at North Texas
Oct. 6 UAB
Oct. 13 at UTSA
Oct. 20 UTEP
Oct. 27 at Florida Atlantic
Nov. 3 at Mississippi State
Nov. 10 Rice
Nov. 17 at Southern Miss
Nov. 24 Western Kentucky

MARSHALL (7-6, 3-5)
Huntington, WV
Sept. 1 at Miami (Ohio)
Sept. 8 Eastern Kentucky
Sept.15 at South Carolina
Sept.22 NC State
Sept.29 at Western Kentucky
Oct. 5 Middle Tennessee
Oct. 13 at Old Dominion
Oct. 20 Florida Atlantic
Nov. 3 at Southern Miss
Nov. 10 Charlotte
Nov. 17 UTSA
Nov. 24 at FIU

MIDDLE TENNESSEE (7-6, 4-4)
Murfreesboro, TN
Sept. 1 at Vanderbilt
Sept. 8 Tennessee-Martin
Sept.15 at Georgia
Sept.29 Florida Atlantic
Oct. 5 at Marshall
Oct. 13 at FIU
Oct. 20 Charlotte
Oct. 27 at Old Dominion
Nov. 2 Western Kentucky
Nov. 10 at UTEP
Nov. 17 at Kentucky
Nov. 24 UAB

NORTH TEXAS (9-5, 7-1)
Denton, TX
Sept. 1 SMU
Sept. 8 Incarnate Word
Sept.15 at Arkansas
Sept.22 at Liberty
Sept.29 Louisiana Tech
Oct. 6 at UTEP
Oct. 13 Southern Miss
Oct. 20 at UAB
Oct. 27 Rice
Nov. 10 at Old Dominion
Nov. 17 Florida Atlantic
Nov. 24 at UTSA

OLD DOMINION (5-7, 3-5)
Norfolk, VA
Sept. 1 at Liberty
Sept. 8 FIU
Sept.15 at Charlotte
Sept.22 Virginia Tech
Sept.29 at East Carolina
Oct. 6 at Florida Atlantic
Oct. 13 Marshall
Oct. 20 at Western Kentucky
Oct. 27 Middle Tennessee
Nov. 10 North Texas
Nov. 17 VMI
Nov. 24 at Rice

RICE (1-11, 1-7)
Houston, TX
Aug. 25 Prairie View A&M
Sept. 1 Houston
Sept. 8 at Hawaii
Sept.22 at Southern Miss
Sept.29 at Wake Forest
Oct. 6 UTSA
Oct. 13 UAB
Oct. 20 at FIU
Oct. 27 at North Texas
Nov. 3 UTEP
Nov. 10 at Louisiana Tech
Nov. 17 at LSU
Nov. 24 Old Dominion

SOUTHERN MISS (8-5, 6-2)
Hattiesburg, MS
Sept. 1 Jackson State
Sept. 8 UL Monroe
Sept.15 at Appalachian State
Sept.22 Rice
Sept.29 at Auburn
Oct. 13 at North Texas
Oct. 20 UTSA
Oct. 27 at Charlotte
Nov. 3 Marshall
Nov. 10 at UAB
Nov. 17 Louisiana Tech
Nov. 24 at UTEP

UAB (8-5, 6-2)
Birmingham, AL
Sept. 1 Savannah State
Sept. 8 at Coastal Carolina
Sept.15 Tulane
Sept.29 Charlotte
Oct. 6 at Louisiana Tech
Oct. 13 at Rice
Oct. 20 North Texas
Oct. 27 at UTEP
Nov. 3 UTSA
Nov. 10 Southern Miss
Nov. 17 at Texas A&M
Nov. 24 at Middle Tennessee

UTEP (0-12, 0-8)
El Paso, TX
Sept. 1 Northern Arizona
Sept. 8 at UNLV
Sept.15 at Tennessee
Sept.22 New Mexico State
Sept.29 at UTSA
Oct. 6 North Texas
Oct. 20 at Louisiana Tech
Oct. 27 UAB
Nov. 3 at Rice
Nov. 10 Middle Tennessee
Nov. 17 at Western Kentucky
Nov. 24 Southern Miss

UTSA (6-5, 3-5)
San Antonio, TX
Sept. 1 at Arizona State
Sept. 8 Baylor
Sept.15 at Kansas State
Sept.22 Texas State
Sept.29 UTEP
Oct. 6 at Rice
Oct. 13 Louisiana Tech
Oct. 20 at Southern Miss
Nov. 3 at UAB
Nov. 10 FIU
Nov. 17 at Marshall
Nov. 24 North Texas

WESTERN KENTUCKY (7-6, 5-3)
Bowling Green, KY
Aug. 31 at Wisconsin
Sept. 8 Maine
Sept.15 at Louisville
Sept.22 at Ball State
Sept.29 Marshall
Oct. 13 at Charlotte
Oct. 20 Old Dominion
Oct. 27 FIU
Nov. 2 at Middle Tennessee
Nov. 10 at Florida Atlantic
Nov. 17 UTEP
Nov. 24 at Louisiana Tech


Louisiana Tech


Florida Atlantic


Toledo


San Diego State

MAC

AKRON (7-7, 6-2)
Akron, OH
Sept. 1 at Nebraska
Sept. 8 Morgan State
Sept.15 at Northwestern
Sept.22 at Iowa State
Oct. 6 Miami (Ohio)
Oct. 13 at Buffalo
Oct. 20 at Kent State
Oct. 27 Central Michigan
Nov. 1 Northern Illinois
Nov. 10 at Eastern Michigan
Nov. 17 Bowling Green
Nov. 23 at Ohio

BALL STATE (2-10, 0-8)
Muncie, IN
Aug.30 Central Conn. State
Sept. 8 at Notre Dame
Sept.15 at Indiana
Sept.22 Western Kentucky
Sept.29 Kent State
Oct. 6 Northern Illinois
Oct. 13 at Central Michigan
Oct. 20 Eastern Michigan
Oct. 25 at Ohio
Oct. 31 at Toledo
Nov. 13 Western Michigan
Nov. 20 at Miami (Ohio)

BOWLING GREEN (2-10, 2-6)
Bowling Green, OH
Sept. 1 at Oregon
Sept. 8 Maryland
Sept.15 Eastern Kentucky
Sept.22 Miami (Ohio)
Sept.29 at Georgia Tech
Oct. 6 at Toledo
Oct. 13 Western Michigan
Oct. 20 at Ohio
Oct. 30 Kent State
Nov. 10 at Central Michigan
Nov. 17 at Akron
Nov. 23 Buffalo

BUFFALO (6-6, 4-4)
Buffalo, NY
Sept. 1 Delaware State
Sept. 8 at Temple
Sept.15 Eastern Michigan
Sept.22 at Rutgers
Sept.29 Army
Oct. 6 at Central Michigan
Oct. 13 Akron
Oct. 20 at Toledo
Oct. 30 Miami (Ohio)
Nov. 6 Kent State
Nov. 14 at Ohio
Nov. 23 at Bowling Green

CENTRAL MICHIGAN (8-5, 6-2)
Mt. Pleasant, MI
Sept. 1 at Kentucky
Sept. 8 Kansas
Sept.15 at Northern Illinois
Sept.22 Maine
Sept.29 at Michigan State
Oct. 6 Buffalo
Oct. 13 Ball State
Oct. 20 Western Michigan
Oct. 27 at Akron
Nov. 3 at Eastern Michigan
Nov. 10 Bowling Green
Nov. 23 at Toledo

EASTERN MICHIGAN (5-7, 3-5)
Ypsilanti, MI
Aug.31 Monmouth
Sept. 8 at Purdue
Sept.15 at Buffalo
Sept.22 at San Diego State
Sept.29 Northern Illinois
Oct. 6 at Western Michigan
Oct. 13 Toledo
Oct. 20 at Ball State
Oct. 27 Army
Nov. 3 Central Michigan
Nov. 10 Akron
Nov. 23 at Kent State

KENT STATE (2-10, 1-7)
Kent, OH
Sept. 1 at Illinois
Sept. 8 Howard
Sept.15 at Penn State
Sept.22 at Ole Miss
Sept.29 at Ball State
Oct. 6 Ohio
Oct. 13 at Miami (Ohio)
Oct. 20 Akron
Oct. 30 at Bowling Green
Nov. 6 at Buffalo
Nov. 15 Toledo
Nov. 23 Eastern Michigan

MIAMI (OHIO) (5-7, 4-4)
Oxford, OH
Sept. 1 Marshall
Sept. 8 at Cincinnati #
Sept.15 at Minnesota
Sept.22 at Bowling Green
Sept.29 Western Michigan
Oct. 6 at Akron
Oct. 13 Kent State
Oct. 20 at Army
Oct. 30 at Buffalo
Nov. 7 Ohio
Nov. 14 at Northern Illinois
Nov. 20 Ball State
#Paul Brown Stadium

NORTHERN ILLINOIS (8-5, 6-2)
DeKalb, IL
Sept. 1 at Iowa
Sept. 8 Utah
Sept.15 Central Michigan
Sept.22 at Florida State
Sept.29 at Eastern Michigan
Oct. 6 at Ball State
Oct. 13 Ohio
Oct. 27 at BYU
Nov. 1 at Akron
Nov. 7 Toledo
Nov. 14 Miami (Ohio)
Nov. 20 at Western Michigan

OHIO (9-4, 5-3)
Athens, OH
Sept. 1 Howard
Sept.15 at Virginia
Sept.22 at Cincinnati
Sept.29 Massachusetts
Oct. 6 at Kent State
Oct. 13 at Northern Illinois
Oct. 20 Bowling Green
Oct. 25 Ball State
Nov. 1 at Western Michigan
Nov. 7 at Miami (Ohio)
Nov. 14 Buffalo
Nov. 23 Akron

TOLEDO (11-3, 7-1)
Toledo, OH
Sept. 1 VMI
Sept.15 Miami (Fla.)
Sept.22 Nevada
Sept.29 at Fresno State
Oct. 6 Bowling Green
Oct. 13 at Eastern Michigan
Oct. 20 Buffalo
Oct. 25 at Western Michigan
Oct. 31 Ball State
Nov. 7 at Northern Illinois
Nov. 15 at Kent State
Nov. 23 Central Michigan

WESTERN MICHIGAN (6-6, 4-4)
Kalamazoo, MI
Aug.31 Syracuse
Sept. 8 at Michigan
Sept.15 Delaware State
Sept.22 at Georgia State
Sept.29 at Miami (Ohio)
Oct. 6 Eastern Michigan
Oct. 13 at Bowling Green
Oct. 20 at Central Michigan
Oct. 25 Toledo
Nov. 1 Ohio
Nov. 13 at Ball State
Nov. 20 Northern Illinois

MOUNTAIN WEST

AIR FORCE (5-7, 4-4)
Colorado Springs, CO
Sept. 1 Stony Brook
Sept. 8 at Florida Atlantic
Sept.22 at Utah State
Sept.29 Nevada
Oct. 6 Navy
Oct. 13 at San Diego State
Oct. 20 at UNLV
Oct. 27 Boise State
Nov. 3 at Army
Nov. 10 New Mexico
Nov. 17 at Wyoming
Nov. 24 Colorado State

BOISE STATE (11-3, 7-1)
Boise, ID
Sept. 1 at Troy
Sept. 8 Connecticut
Sept.15 at Oklahoma State
Sept.29 at Wyoming
Oct. 6 San Diego State
Oct. 13 at Nevada
Oct. 19 Colorado State
Oct. 27 at Air Force
Nov. 3 BYU
Nov. 10 Fresno State
Nov. 17 at New Mexico
Nov. 24 Utah State

COLORADO STATE (7-6, 5-3)
Fort Collins, CO
Aug.25 Hawaii
Aug.31 vs. Colorado #
Sept. 8 Arkansas
Sept.15 at Florida
Sept.22 Illinois State
Oct. 6 at San José State
Oct. 13 New Mexico
Oct. 19 at Boise State
Oct. 27 Wyoming
Nov. 10 at Nevada
Nov. 17 Utah State
Nov. 24 at Air Force
#Denver, CO

FRESNO STATE (10-4, 7-1)
Fresno, CA
Sept. 1 Idaho
Sept. 8 at Minnesota
Sept.15 at UCLA
Sept.29 Toledo
Oct. 6 at Nevada
Oct. 13 Wyoming
Oct. 20 at New Mexico
Oct. 27 Hawaii
Nov. 3 at UNLV
Nov. 10 at Boise State
Nov. 17 San Diego State
Nov. 24 San Jose State

HAWAII (3-9, 1-7)
Honolulu, HI
Aug.25 at Colorado State
Sept. 1 Navy
Sept. 8 Rice
Sept.15 at Army
Sept.22 Duquesne
Sept.29 at San Jose State
Oct. 6 Wyoming
Oct. 13 at BYU
Oct. 20 Nevada
Oct. 27 at Fresno State
Nov. 3 Utah State
Nov. 17 UNLV
Nov. 24 at San Diego State

NEVADA (4-8, 3-5)
Reno, NV
Sept. 1 Portland State
Sept. 8 at Vanderbilt
Sept.15 Oregon State
Sept.22 at Toledo
Sept.29 at Air Force
Oct. 6 Fresno State
Oct. 13 Boise State
Oct. 20 at Hawaii
Oct. 27 San Diego State
Nov. 10 Colorado State
Nov. 17 at San José State
Nov. 24 at UNLV

NEW MEXICO (3-9, 1-7)
Albuquerque, NM
Sept. 1 Incarnate Word
Sept. 8 at Wisconsin
Sept.15 at New Mexico State
Sept.29 Liberty
Oct. 6 at UNLV
Oct. 13 at Colorado State
Oct. 20 Fresno State
Oct. 27 at Utah State
Nov. 3 San Diego State
Nov. 10 at Air Force
Nov. 17 Boise State
Nov. 24 Wyoming

SAN DIEGO STATE (10-3, 6-2)
San Diego, CA
Aug.31 at Stanford
Sept. 8 Sacramento State
Sept.15 Arizona State
Sept.22 Eastern Michigan
Oct. 6 at Boise State
Oct. 13 Air Force
Oct. 20 San José State
Oct. 27 at Nevada
Nov. 3 at New Mexico
Nov. 10 UNLV
Nov. 17 at Fresno State
Nov. 24 Hawaii

Oklahoma: Layne Murdoch; Florida Atlantic:: Courtesy FAU Athletics; Toledo: The University of Toledo; SDSU: Ernie Anderson, SDSU Athletic Media Relations; LA Tech: Ben Breeland La Tech Athletics

SAN JOSE STATE (2-11, 1-7)
San Jose, CA
Aug. 30 UC Davis
Sept. 8 at Washington State
Sept. 15 at Oregon
Sept. 29 Hawaii
Oct. 6 Colorado State
Oct. 13 Army
Oct. 20 at San Diego State
Oct. 27 UNLV
Nov. 3 at Wyoming
Nov. 10 at Utah State
Nov. 17 Nevada
Nov. 24 at Fresno State

UNLV (5-7, 4-4)
Las Vegas, NV
Sept. 1 at USC
Sept. 8 UTEP
Sept. 15 Prairie View A&M
Sept. 22 at Arkansas State
Oct. 6 New Mexico
Oct. 13 at Utah State
Oct. 20 Air Force
Oct. 27 at San Jose State
Nov. 3 Fresno State
Nov. 10 at San Diego State
Nov. 17 at Hawaii
Nov. 24 Nevada

UTAH STATE (6-7, 4-4)
Logan, UT
Aug. 31 at Michigan State
Sept. 8 New Mexico State
Sept. 13 Tennessee Tech
Sept. 22 Air Force
Oct. 5 at BYU
Oct. 13 UNLV
Oct. 20 at Wyoming
Oct. 27 New Mexico
Nov. 3 at Hawaii
Nov. 10 San Jose State
Nov. 17 at Colorado State
Nov. 24 at Boise State

WYOMING (8-5, 5-3)
Laramie, WY
Aug. 25 at New Mexico State
Sept. 1 Washington State
Sept. 8 at Missouri
Sept. 15 Wofford
Sept. 29 Boise State
Oct. 6 at Hawaii
Oct. 13 at Fresno State
Oct. 20 Utah State
Oct. 27 at Colorado State
Nov. 3 San Jose State
Nov. 17 Air Force
Nov. 24 at New Mexico

PAC-12

ARIZONA (7-6, 5-4)
Tucson, AZ
Sept. 1 BYU
Sept. 8 at Houston
Sept. 15 Southern Utah
Sept. 22 at Oregon State
Sept. 29 USC
Oct. 6 California
Oct. 12 at Utah
Oct. 20 at UCLA
Oct. 27 Oregon
Nov. 2 Colorado
Nov. 17 at Washington State
Nov. 24 Arizona State

ARIZONA STATE (7-6, 6-3)
Tempe, AZ
Sept. 1 UTSA
Sept. 8 Michigan State
Sept. 15 at San Diego State
Sept. 22 at Washington
Sept. 29 Oregon State
Oct. 6 at Colorado
Oct. 18 Stanford
Oct. 27 at USC
Nov. 3 Utah
Nov. 10 UCLA
Nov. 17 at Oregon
Nov. 24 at Arizona

CALIFORNIA (5-7, 3-6)
Berkeley, CA
Sept. 1 North Carolina
Sept. 8 at BYU
Sept. 15 Idaho State
Sept. 29 Oregon
Oct. 6 at Arizona
Oct. 13 UCLA
Oct. 20 at Oregon State
Oct. 27 Washington
Nov. 3 at Washington State
Nov. 10 at USC
Nov. 17 Stanford
Nov. 24 Colorado

COLORADO (5-7, 2-7)
Boulder, CO
Sept. 1 vs. Colorado State #
Sept. 8 at Nebraska
Sept. 15 New Hampshire
Sept. 28 UCLA
Oct. 6 Arizona State
Oct. 13 at USC
Oct. 20 at Washington
OCT. 27 Oregon State
Nov. 2 at Arizona
Nov. 10 Washington State
Nov. 17 Utah
Nov. 24 at California
#Denver, CO

OREGON (7-6, 4-5)
Eugene, OR
Sept. 1 Bowling Green
Sept. 8 Portland State
Sept. 15 San Jose State
Sept. 22 Stanford
Sept. 29 at California
Oct. 13 Washington
Oct. 20 at Washington State
Oct. 27 at Arizona
Nov. 3 UCLA
Nov. 10 at Utah
Nov. 17 Arizona State
Nov. 23 at Oregon State

OREGON STATE (1-11, 0-9)
Corvallis, OR
Sept. 1 at Ohio State
Sept. 8 Southern Utah
Sept. 15 at Nevada
Sept. 22 Arizona
Sept. 29 at Arizona State
Oct. 6 Washington State
Oct. 20 California
Oct. 27 at Colorado
Nov. 3 USC
Nov. 10 at Stanford
Nov. 17 at Washington
Nov. 23 Oregon

STANFORD (9-5, 7-2)
Stanford, CA
Aug. 31 San Diego State
Sept. 8 USC
Sept. 15 UC Davis
Sept. 22 at Oregon
Sept. 29 at Notre Dame
Oct. 6 Utah
Oct. 18 at Arizona State
Oct. 27 Washington State
Nov. 3 at Washington
Nov. 10 Oregon State
Nov. 17 at California
Nov. 24 at UCLA

UCLA (6-7, 4-5)
Los Angeles, CA
Sept. 1 Cincinnati
Sept. 8 at Oklahoma
Sept. 15 Fresno State
Sept. 28 at Colorado
Oct. 6 Washington
Oct. 13 at California
Oct. 20 Arizona
Oct. 26 Utah
Nov. 3 at Oregon
Nov. 10 at Arizona State
Nov. 17 USC
Nov. 24 Stanford

USC (11-3, 8-1)
Los Angeles, CA
Sept. 1 UNLV
Sept. 8 at Stanford
Sept. 15 at Texas
Sept. 21 Washington State
Sept. 29 at Arizona
Oct. 13 Colorado
Oct. 20 at Utah
Oct. 27 Arizona State
Nov. 3 at Oregon State
Nov. 10 California
Nov. 17 at UCLA
Nov. 24 Notre Dame

UTAH (7-6, 3-6)
Salt Lake City, UT
Aug. 30 Weber State
Sept. 8 at Northern Illinois
Sept. 15 Washington
Sept. 29 at Washington State
Oct. 6 at Stanford
Oct. 12 Arizona
Oct. 20 USC
Oct. 26 at UCLA
Nov. 3 at Arizona State
Nov. 10 Oregon
Nov. 17 at Colorado
Nov. 24 BYU

WASHINGTON (10-3, 6-2)
Seattle, WA
Sept. 1 vs Auburn #
Sept. 8 North Dakota
Sept. 15 at Utah
Sept. 22 Arizona State
Sept. 29 BYU
Oct. 6 at UCLA
Oct. 13 at Oregon
Oct. 20 Colorado
Oct. 27 at California
Nov. 3 Stanford
Nov. 17 Oregon State
Nov. 23 at Washington State
#Atlanta, GA


Auburn

WASHINGTON STATE (9-4, 6-3)
Pullman, WA
Sept. 1 at Wyoming
Sept. 8 San Jose State
Sept. 15 Eastern Washington
Sept. 21 at USC
Sept. 29 Utah
Oct. 6 at Oregon State
Oct. 20 Oregon
Oct. 27 at Stanford
Nov. 3 California
Nov. 10 at Colorado
Nov. 17 Arizona
Nov. 23 Washington

SEC

ALABAMA (13-1, 7-1)
Tuscaloosa, AL
Sept. 1 vs. Louisville #
Sept. 8 Arkansas State
Sept. 15 at Ole Miss
Sept. 22 Texas A&M
Sept. 29 Louisiana
Oct. 6 at Arkansas
Oct. 13 Missouri
Oct. 20 at Tennessee
Nov. 3 at LSU
Nov. 10 Mississippi State
Nov. 17 The Citadel
Nov. 24 Auburn
#Orlando, FL

ARKANSAS (4-8, 1-7)
Fayetteville, AR
Sept. 1 Eastern Illinois
Sept. 8 at Colorado State
Sept. 15 North Texas
Sept. 22 at Auburn
Sept. 29 vs. Texas A&M #
Oct. 6 Alabama
Oct. 13 vs. Ole Miss %
Oct. 20 Tulsa
Oct. 27 Vanderbilt
Nov. 10 LSU
Nov. 17 at Mississippi State
Nov. 24 at Missouri
#Arlington, TX %Little Rock, AR

AUBURN (10-4, 7-1)
Auburn, AL
Sept. 1 vs. Washington #
Sept. 8 Alabama State
Sept. 15 LSU
Sept. 22 Arkansas
Sept. 29 Southern Miss
Oct. 6 at Mississippi State
Oct. 13 Tennessee
Oct. 20 at Ole Miss
Nov. 3 Texas A&M
Nov. 10 at Georgia
Nov. 17 Liberty
Nov. 24 at Alabama
#Atlanta, GA

FLORIDA (4-7, 3-5)
Gainesville, FL
Sept. 1 Charleston Southern
Sept. 8 Kentucky
Sept. 15 Colorado State
Sept. 22 at Tennessee
Sept. 29 at Mississippi State
Oct. 6 LSU
Oct. 13 at Vanderbilt
Oct. 27 vs. Georgia #
Nov. 3 Missouri
Nov. 10 South Carolina
Nov. 17 Idaho
Nov. 24 at Florida State
#Jacksonville, FL

GEORGIA (13-2, 7-1)
Athens, GA
Sept. 1 Austin Peay
Sept. 8 at South Carolina
Sept. 15 Middle Tennessee
Sept. 22 at Missouri
Sept. 29 Tennessee
Oct. 6 Vanderbilt
Oct. 13 at LSU
Oct. 27 vs Florida #
Nov. 3 at Kentucky
Nov. 10 Auburn
Nov. 17 Massachusetts
Nov. 24 Georgia Tech
#Jacksonville, FL

KENTUCKY (7-6, 4-4)
Lexington, KY
Sept. 1 Central Michigan
Sept. 8 at Florida
Sept. 15 Murray State
Sept. 22 Mississippi State
Sept. 29 South Carolina
Oct. 6 at Texas A&M
Oct. 20 Vanderbilt
Oct. 27 at Missouri
Nov. 3 Georgia
Nov. 10 at Tennessee
Nov. 17 Middle Tennessee
Nov. 24 at Louisville

LSU (9-4, 6-2)
Baton Rouge, LA
Sept. 2 vs. Miami #
Sept. 8 SE Louisiana
Sept. 15 at Auburn
Sept. 22 Louisiana Tech
Sept. 29 Ole Miss
Oct. 6 at Florida
Oct. 13 Georgia
Oct. 20 Mississippi State
Nov. 3 Alabama
Nov. 10 at Arkansas
Nov. 17 Rice
Nov. 24 at Texas A&M
#Arlington, TX

Auburn, Vanderbilt: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; South Alabama: Scott Donaldson/South Alabama Strategic Communications

MISSISSIPPI STATE (9-4, 4-4)
Starkville, MS
Sept. 1 Stephen F. Austin
Sept. 8 at Kansas State
Sept.15 Louisiana
Sept.22 at Kentucky
Sept.29 Florida
Oct. 6 Auburn
Oct. 20 at LSU
Oct. 27 Texas A&M
Nov. 3 Louisiana Tech
Nov. 10 at Alabama
Nov. 17 Arkansas
Nov. 22 at Ole Miss

MISSOURI (7-6, 4-4)
Columbia, MO
Sept. 1 Tennessee-Martin
Sept. 8 Wyoming
Sept.15 at Purdue
Sept.22 Georgia
Oct. 6 at South Carolina
Oct. 13 at Alabama
Oct. 20 Memphis
Oct. 27 Kentucky
Nov. 3 at Florida
Nov. 10 Vanderbilt
Nov. 17 at Tennessee
Nov. 24 Arkansas

OLE MISS (6-6, 3-5)
Oxford, MS
Sept. 1 vs. Texas Tech #
Sept. 8 Southern Illinois
Sept.15 Alabama
Sept.22 Kent State
Sept.29 at LSU
Oct. 6 UL Monroe
Oct. 13 vs. Arkansas %
Oct. 20 Auburn
Nov. 3 South Carolina
Nov. 10 at Texas A&M
Nov. 17 at Vanderbilt
Nov. 22 Mississippi State
#Houston, TX %Little Rock, AR

SOUTH CAROLINA (9-4, 5-3)
Columbia, SC
Sept. 1 Coastal Carolina
Sept. 8 Georgia
Sept.15 Marshall
Sept.22 at Vanderbilt
Sept.29 at Kentucky
Oct. 6 Missouri
Oct. 13 Texas A&M
Oct. 27 Tennessee
Nov. 3 at Ole Miss
Nov. 10 at Florida
Nov. 17 Chattanooga
Nov. 24 at Clemson

TENNESSEE (4-8, 0-8)
Knoxville, TN
Sept. 1 vs. West Virginia #
Sept. 8 East Tennessee St.
Sept.15 UTEP
Sept.22 Florida
Sept.29 at Georgia
Oct. 13 at Auburn
Oct. 20 Alabama
Oct. 27 at South Carolina
Nov. 3 Charlotte
Nov. 10 Kentucky
Nov. 17 Missouri
Nov. 24 at Vanderbilt
#Charlotte, NC

TEXAS A&M (7-6, 4-4)
College Station, TX
Aug.30 Northwestern State
Sept. 8 Clemson
Sept.15 UL Monroe
Sept.22 at Alabama
Sept.29 vs Arkansas #
Oct. 6 Kentucky
Oct. 13 at South Carolina
Oct. 27 at Mississippi State
Nov. 3 at Auburn
Nov. 10 Ole Miss
Nov. 17 UAB
Nov. 24 LSU
#Arlington, TX



VANDERBILT (5-7, 1-7)
Nashville, TN
Sept. 1 Middle Tennessee
Sept. 8 Nevada
Sept.15 at Notre Dame
Sept.22 South Carolina
Sept.29 Tennessee State
Oct. 6 at Georgia
Oct. 13 Florida
Oct. 20 at Kentucky
Oct. 27 at Arkansas
Nov. 10 at Missouri
Nov. 17 Ole Miss
Nov. 24 Tennessee

SUN BELT

APPALACHIAN STATE (9-4, 7-1)
Boone, NC
Sept. 1 at Penn State
Sept. 8 at Charlotte
Sept.15 Southern Miss
Sept.22 Gardner-Webb
Sept.29 South Alabama
Oct. 9 at Arkansas State
Oct. 20 Louisiana
Oct. 25 at Georgia Southern
Nov. 3 at Coastal Carolina
Nov. 10 at Texas State
Nov. 17 Georgia State
Nov. 24 Troy

ARKANSAS STATE (7-5, 6-2)
Jonesboro, AR
Sept. 1 SE Missouri
Sept. 8 at Alabama
Sept.15 at Tulsa
Sept.22 UNLV
Sept.29 at Georgia Southern
Oct. 9 Appalachian State
Oct. 18 Georgia State
Oct. 27 at Louisiana
Nov. 3 South Alabama
Nov. 10 at Coastal Carolina
Nov. 17 UL Monroe
Nov. 24 at Texas State

COASTAL CAROLINA (3-9, 2-6)
Conway, SC
Sept. 1 at South Carolina
Sept. 8 UAB
Sept.15 Campbell
Sept.22 at Louisiana
Sept.29 at Troy
Oct. 13 UL Monroe
Oct. 20 at Massachusetts
Oct. 27 at Georgia State
Nov. 3 Appalachian State
Nov. 10 Arkansas State
Nov. 17 Georgia Southern
Nov. 24 at South Alabama

GEORGIA SOUTHERN (2-10, 2-6)
Statesboro, GA
Sept. 1 South Carolina State
Sept. 8 Massachusetts
Sept.15 at Clemson
Sept.29 Arkansas State
Oct. 6 South Alabama
Oct. 11 at Texas State
Oct. 20 at New Mexico State
Oct. 25 Appalachian State
Nov. 3 at UL Monroe
Nov. 10 Troy
Nov. 17 at Coastal Carolina
Nov. 24 at Georgia State

GEORGIA STATE (7-5, 5-3)
Atlanta, GA
Aug.30 Kennesaw State
Sept. 8 at NC State
Sept.14 at Memphis
Sept.22 Western Michigan
Sept.29 UL Monroe
Oct. 4 at Troy
Oct. 18 at Arkansas State
Oct. 27 Coastal Carolina
Nov. 3 Texas State
Nov. 10 at Louisiana
Nov. 17 at Appalachian State
Nov. 24 Georgia Southern

LOUISIANA (5-7, 4-4)
Lafayette, LA
Sept. 1 Grambling
Sept.15 at Mississippi State
Sept.22 Coastal Carolina
Sept.29 at Alabama
Oct. 6 at Texas State
Oct. 13 New Mexico State
Oct. 20 at Appalachian State
Oct. 27 Arkansas State
Nov. 3 at Troy
Nov. 10 Georgia State
Nov. 17 South Alabama
Nov. 24 at UL Monroe

UL MONROE (4-8, 4-4)
Monroe, LA
Sept. 1 SE Louisiana
Sept. 8 at Southern Miss
Sept.15 at Texas A&M
Sept.22 Troy
Sept.29 at Georgia State
Oct. 6 at Ole Miss
Oct. 13 at Coastal Carolina
Oct. 20 Texas State
Nov. 3 Georgia Southern
Nov. 10 at South Alabama
Nov. 17 at Arkansas State
Nov. 24 Louisiana



SOUTH ALABAMA (4-8, 3-5)
Mobile, AL
Sept. 1 Louisiana Tech
Sept. 8 at Oklahoma State
Sept.15 Texas State
Sept.22 at Memphis
Sept.29 at Appalachian State
Oct. 6 at Georgia Southern
Oct. 13 Alabama State
Oct. 23 Troy
Nov. 3 at Arkansas State
Nov. 10 UL Monroe
Nov. 17 at Louisiana
Nov. 24 Coastal Carolina

TEXAS STATE (2-10, 1-7)
San Marcos, TX
Sept. 1 at Rutgers
Sept. 8 Texas Southern
Sept.15 at South Alabama
Sept.22 at UTSA
Oct. 6 Louisiana
Oct. 11 Georgia Southern
Oct. 20 at UL Monroe
Oct. 27 New Mexico State
Nov. 3 at Georgia State
Nov. 10 Appalachian State
Nov. 17 at Troy
Nov. 24 Arkansas State

TROY (11-2, 7-1)
Troy, AL
Sept. 1 Boise State
Sept. 8 Florida A&M
Sept.15 at Nebraska
Sept.22 at UL Monroe
Sept.29 Coastal Carolina
Oct. 4 Georgia State
Oct. 13 at Liberty
Oct. 23 at South Alabama
Nov. 3 Louisiana
Nov. 10 at Georgia Southern
Nov. 17 Texas State
Nov. 24 at Appalachian State

INDEPENDENTS

ARMY (10-3)
West Point, NY
Sept. 1 at Duke
Sept. 8 Liberty
Sept.15 Hawaii
Sept.22 at Oklahoma
Sept.29 at Buffalo
Oct. 13 at San Jose State
Oct. 20 Miami (Ohio)
Oct. 27 at Eastern Michigan
Nov. 3 Air Force
Nov. 10 Lafayette
Nov. 17 Colgate
Dec. 8 vs. Navy #
#Philadelphia, PA

BYU (4-9)
Provo, UT
Sept. 1 at Arizona
Sept. 8 California
Sept.15 at Wisconsin
Sept.22 McNeese State
Sept.29 at Washington
Oct. 5 Utah State
Oct. 13 Hawaii
Oct. 27 Northern Illinois
Nov. 3 at Boise State
Nov. 10 vs. Massachusetts #
Nov. 17 New Mexico State
Nov. 24 at Utah
#Foxboro, MA

LIBERTY (6-5)
Lynchburg, VA
Sept. 1 Old Dominion
Sept. 8 at Army
Sept.15 Norfolk State
Sept.22 North Texas
Sept.29 at New Mexico
Oct 6 at New Mexico State
Oct. 13 Troy
Oct. 20 Idaho State
Nov. 3 at Massachusetts
Nov. 10 at Virginia
Nov. 17 at Auburn
Nov. 24 New Mexico State

MASSACHUSETTS (4-8)
Amherst, MA
Aug.25 Duquesne
Sept. 1 at Boston College
Sept. 8 at Georgia Southern
Sept.15 at FIU
Sept.22 Charlotte
Sept.29 at Ohio
Oct. 6 South Florida
Oct. 20 Coastal Carolina
Oct. 27 at Connecticut
Nov. 3 Liberty
Nov. 10 vs BYU #
Nov. 17 at Georgia
#Foxboro, MA

NEW MEXICO STATE (7-6, 4-4)
Las Cruces, NM
Aug.25 Wyoming
Aug.30 at Minnesota
Sept. 8 at Utah State
Sept.15 New Mexico
Sept.22 at UTEP
Oct. 6 Liberty
Oct. 13 at Louisiana
Oct. 20 Georgia Southern
Oct. 27 at Texas State
Nov. 3 Alcorn State
Nov. 17 at BYU
Nov. 24 at Liberty

NOTRE DAME (10-3)
South Bend, IN
Sept. 1 Michigan
Sept. 8 Ball State
Sept.15 Vanderbilt
Sept.22 at Wake Forest
Sept.29 Stanford
Oct. 6 at Virginia Tech
Oct. 13 Pittsburgh
Oct. 27 vs. Navy #
Nov. 3 at Northwestern
Nov. 10 Florida State
Nov. 17 vs. Syracuse %
Nov. 24 at USC
#San Diego, CA %Bronx, NY

SIDELINE Spirit



LONGHORNS



BRUINS



TROJANS



SOONERS



WILDCATS



BOILERMAKERS



GATORS



TIGERS



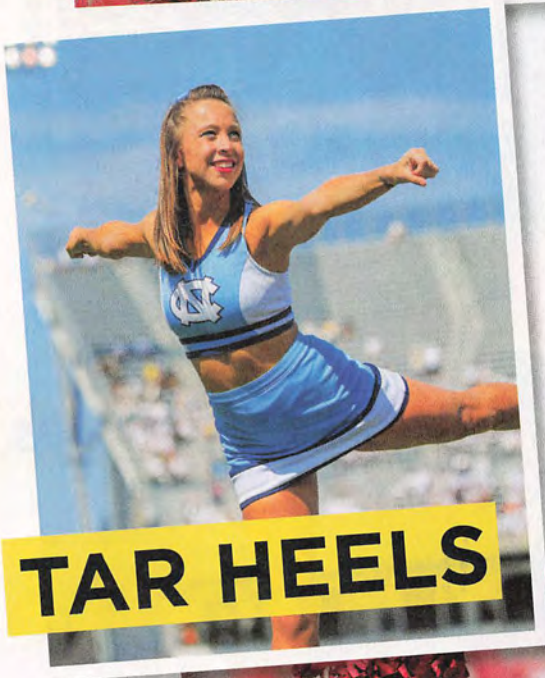
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CYCLONES



ORANGE



TAR HEELS

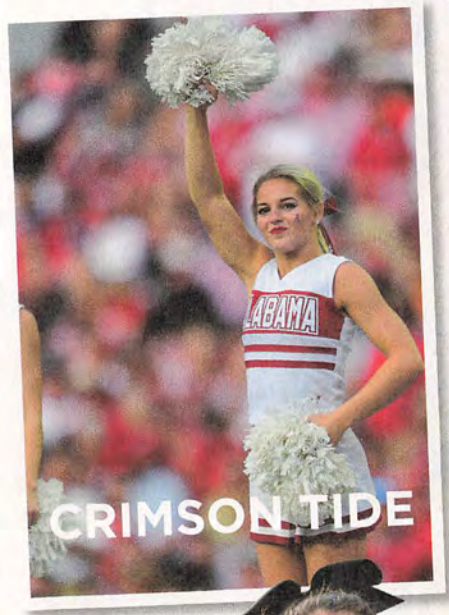


BULLDOGS



GOLDEN BEARS


HOOSIERS


CRIMSON TIDE


HURRICANES


TIGERS

MIZZOU
TIGERS



TIGERS





RAZORBACKS



HAWKEYES


BULLDOGS


WOLVERINES


REBELS
Ole Miss


TCU
HORNED FROGS


YELLOW JACKETS


DUKE
BLUE DEVILS



WILDCATS



PANTHERS



COWBOYS



CARDINAL



MOUNTAINEERS



SUN DEVILS



RED RAIDERS

Recruiting

2018 Signees

1. Trevor Lawrence	Cartersville (Cartersville, GA)	QB	6-6	208	Clemson
2. Justin Fields	Harrison (Kennesaw, GA)	QB	6-3	221	Georgia
3. Xavier Thomas	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	DE	6-3	260	Clemson
4. Eyabi Anoma	St. Frances Academy (Baltimore, MD)	DE	6-5	235	Alabama
5. Micah Parsons	Harrisburg (Harrisburg, PA)	DE	6-3	235	Penn State
6. Patrick Surtain Jr.	American Heritage (For Lauderdale, FL)	CB	6-1	199	Alabama
7. Nicholas Petit-Frere	Berkeley Prep (Tampa, FL)	OT	6-6	272	Ohio State
8. Justin Shorter	South Brunswick (Momnouth Junction, NJ)	WR	6-4	213	Penn State
9. Zamir White	Scotland County (Laurinburg, NC)	RB	6-1	220	Georgia
10. Jamaree Salyer	Pace Academy (Atlanta, GA)	OG	6-4	342	Georgia
11. Amon-Ra St. Brown	Mater Del (Anaheim, CA)	WR	6-0	191	USC
12. Tyson Campbell	American Heritage (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	CB	6-3	180	Georgia
13. Terrace Marshall	Parkway (Bossier City, LA)	WR	6-3	192	LSU
14. KJ Henry	West Forsyth (Clemmons, NC)	DE	6-6	235	Clemson
15. Palaie Gaoteote	Bishop Gorman (Las Vegas, NV)	LB	6-2	235	USC
16. JT Daniels	Mater Dei (Santa Ana, CA)	QB	6-2	205	USC



17. Jackson Carman	Fairfield (Fairfield, OH)	OT	6-6	330	Clemson
18. Adam Anderson	Rome (Rome, GA)	LB	6-4	214	Georgia
19. Caden Sterns	Steele (Cibolo, TX)	S	6-1	192	Texas
20. Taron Vincent	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	DT	6-2	285	Ohio State
21. Tyreke Johnson	Trinity Christian Academy (Jacksonville, FL)	S	6-1	191	Ohio State
22. Cade Mays	Knoxville Catholic (Knoxville, TN)	OT	6-6	318	Georgia
23. Brenton Cox	Stockbridge (Stockbridge, GA)	DE	6-5	247	Georgia
24. BJ Foster	Angleton (Angleton, TX)	S	6-1	188	Texas
25. Lorenzo Lingard	University (Orange City, FL)	RB	6-0	190	Miami (Fla.)
26. Derion Kendrick	South Pointe (Rock Hill, SC)	WR	6-1	184	Clemson
27. Ricky Slade	C.D. Hylton (Woodbridge, VA)	RB	5-9	185	Penn State
28. Olaijah Griffin	Mission Viejo (Mission Viejo, CA)	CB	6-0	170	USC
29. Brey Walker	Westmoore (Moore, OK)	OT	6-7	320	Oklahoma
30. Jaelen Gill	Westerville South (Westerville, OH)	RB	6-1	182	Ohio State
31. Quay Walker	Crisp County (Cordele, GA)	LB	6-4	236	Georgia
32. Isaac Taylor-Stuart	Helix (San Diego, CA)	CB	6-2	187	USC
33. Brevin Jordan	Bishop Gorman (Las Vegas, NV)	TE	6-3	250	Miami (Fla.)
34. Tyreke Smith	Cleveland Heights (Cleveland, OH)	DE	6-3	204	Ohio State
35. Jaiden Woodbey	St. John Bosco (Fontana, CA)	S	6-2	204	Florida State
36. Dorian Thompson-Robinson	Bishop Gorman (Las Vegas, NV)	QB	6-2	195	UCLA
37. Jeremy Ruckert	Lindenhurst (Lindenhurst, NY)	TE	6-6	238	Ohio State
38. Brendan Radley-Hiles	IMG Academy (Brandenton, FL)	CB	5-10	183	Oklahoma
39. Jaylen Waddle	Episcopal (Bellaire, TX)	WR	5-10	175	Alabama
40. Devon Williams	Antelope Valley (Lancaster, CA)	WR	6-4	200	USC
41. James Cook	Northwestern (Miami, FL)	RB	6-0	181	Georgia



Trevor Lawrence

42. Kelvin Joseph	Scotlandville Magnet (Baton Rouge, LA)	S	6-2	191	LSU
43. Justin Rogers	Parkway (Bossier City, LA)	QB	6-4	210	TCU
44. Teradja Mitchell	Bishop Sullivan Catholic (Virginia Beach, VA)	LB	6-2	232	Ohio State
45. Justyn Ross	Central (Phenix City, AL)	WR	6-4	201	Clemson
46. Tanner McKee	Centennial (Corona, CA)	QB	6-6	220	Stanford
47. Jalen Green	Heights (Houston, TX)	CB	6-0	171	Texas
48. JJ Peterson	Colquitt County (Moultrie, GA)	LB	6-3	231	Tennessee
49. Joey Gatewood	Bartram Trail (Jacksonville, FL)	ATH	6-4	232	Auburn
50. Anthony Lytton	Dr. Henry Wise (Upper Marlboro, MD)	CB	5-10	173	Florida State
51. Luke Ford	Carterville (Carterville, IL)	TE	6-6	248	Georgia
52. DeMarvion Overshown	Arp (Arp, TX)	S	6-4	200	Texas
53. William Barnes	Apopka (Apopka, FL)	OT	6-4	325	UNC
54. Nesta Silvera	American Heritage (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	DT	6-2	308	Miami (Fla.)
55. Tommy Togiai	Highland (Pocatello, ID)	DT	6-3	290	Ohio State
56. Kyler McMichael	Greater Atlanta Christian (Norcross, GA)	CB	6-1	201	Clemson
57. Penei Sewell	Desert Hills (Saint George, Utah)	OG	6-5	349	Oregon
58. Jordyn Adams	Green Hope (Cary,NC)	WR	6-2	175	UNC
59. Marquis Spiker	Murrieta Valley (Murrieta, CA)	WR	6-3	180	Washington
60. Asante Samuel Jr.	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	CB	5-10	166	Florida State
61. Brennan Eagles	Alief Taylor (Houston, TX)	WR	6-4	214	Texas
62. Trey Hill	Houston County (Warner Robins, GA)	OG	6-4	346	Georgia
63. Matt Corral	Long Beach Poly (Long Beach, CA)	QB	6-2	202	Ole Miss
64. Anthony Cook	Lamar (Houston, TX)	CB	6-0	168	Texas
65. Rasheed Walker	North Point (Waldorf, MD)	OT	6-6	290	Penn State
66. Ronnie Perkins	Lutheran North (St. Louis, MO)	DE	6-3	256	Oklahoma
67. Mark Pope	Miami Southridge (Hialeah, FL)	WR	6-1	175	Miami (Fla.)
68. Matthew Jones	Erasmus Hall (Brooklyn, NY)	OC	6-4	300	Ohio State
69. Jacob Copeland	Escambia (Pensacola, FL)	WR	6-0	192	Florida
70. Houston Griffith	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	CB	6-1	192	Notre Dame
71. Josh Proctor	Owasso (Owasso, OK)	S	6-2	190	Ohio State
72. Michael Thompson	Parkway North (St. Louis, MO)	DT	6-4	291	Oklahoma
73. Kamryn Babb	Christian Brothers (St. Louis, MO)	WR	6-1	189	Ohio State
74. Stephon Wynn	IMG Academy (Anderson, SC)	DE	6-4	308	Alabama
75. Leon O'Neal Jr.	Cy Springs (Cypress, TX)	S	6-1	190	Texas A&M

AP

Rankings provided by 247COMPOSITE

76. Jayson Oweh	Blair Academy (Blairstown, NJ)	DE	6-5	236	Penn State
77. Jarren Williams	Central Gwinnett (Lawrenceville, GA)	QB	6-2	206	Miami (Fla.)
78. PJ Mustipher	McDonogh School (Owings Mills, MD)	DT	6.5	290	Penn State
79. Payton Wilson	Orange (Hillsborough, NC)	LB	6-4	225	NC State
80. Brian Snead	Armwood (Seffner, FL)	RB	5-11	200	Ohio State
81. Richard Gouraige	Cambridge Christian School (Tampa, FL)	OT	6-5	271	Florida
82. Kevin Austin	North Broward Prep (Pompano Beach, FL)	WR	6-3	198	Notre Dame
83. Phil Jurkovec	Pine-Richland (Gibsonia, PA)	QB	6-5	215	Notre Dame
84. Ja'Marr Chase	Archbishop Rummel (Metairie, LA)	WR	6-1	195	LSU
85. Emory Jones	Heard County (Franklin, GA)	QB	6-3	195	Florida
86. Solomon Tuliaupupu	Mater Dei (Santa Ana, CA)	LB	6-2	220	USC
87. Otis Reese	Lee County (Leesburg, GA)	LB	6-4	206	Georgia
88. Talanoa Hufanga	Crescent Valley (Corvallis, OR)	ATH	6-1	193	USC
89. Justin Watkins	East Ridge (Clermont, FL)	WR	5-11	172	Florida
90. Shayne Simon	St. Peters Prep (Jersey City, NJ)	LB	6-3	215	Notre Dame
91. Colson Yankoff	Coeur d'Alene (Coeur d'Alene, ID)	QB	6-4	204	Washington
92. Matthew Hill	Brookwood (Snellville, GA)	WR	6-2	185	Auburn
93. Tyler Friday	Don Bosco Prep (Ramsey, NJ)	DT	6-3	263	Ohio State
94. Jacob Sirmon	Bothell (Bothell, WA)	QB	6-4	227	Washington
95. Jalen Preston	Manvel (Manvel, TX)	WR	6-2	212	Texas A&M
96. Joshua Moore	Yoakum (Yoakum, TX)	WR	6-1	170	Texas
97. Al Blades Jr.	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	CB	6-0	170	Miami (Fla.)
98. Bryan Addison	Junipero Serra (Gardena, CA)	ATH	6-5	180	UCLA
99. Jack Lamb	Great Oak (Temecula, CA)	LB	6-4	220	Notre Dame
100. T.J. Pledger	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	RB	5-8	190	Oklahoma
101. Ron Tatum	Putnam City (Oklahoma City, OK)	DE	6.5	269	Oklahoma



T.J. Pledger

102. Josh Belk	Lewisville (Richburg, SC)	DT	6-3	309	Clemson
103. Channing Tindall	Spring Valley (Columbia, SC)	LB	6-2	213	Georgia
104. Al'Vonte Woodard	Lamar (Houston, TX)	WR	6-1	193	Texas
105. Tuli Letuligasenoa	De La Salle (Concord, CA)	DT	6-1	338	Washington
106. Derrik Allen	Lassiter (Marietta, GA)	S	6-2	211	Notre Dame
107. Jalyn Armour-Davis	St. Paul's Episcopal (Mobile, AL)	CB	6-1	180	Alabama
108. Jordan Davis	Southwind (Memphis, TN)	DE	6-5	238	Alabama
109. Josh Jobe	Cheshire Academy (Cheshire, CT)	CB	6-1	180	Alabama
110. Justin Dedich	Chaparral (Temecula, CA)	OC	6-2	290	USC
111. Ricky Person	Heritage (Wake Forest, NC)	RB	6-2	202	NC State
112. Aidan Hutchinson	Divine Child (Dearborn, MI)	DE	6-6	260	Michigan
113. Emil Ekiyor	Cathedral (Indianapolis, IN)	OC	6-2	322	Alabama
114. Mario Goodrich	Lee's Summit West (Lees Summit, MO)	ATH	6-2	180	Clemson
115. D'Shawn Jamison	Lamar (Houston, TX)	CB	5-10	174	Texas
116. Nana Asiedu	North Stafford (Stafford, VA)	OT	6-5	265	Penn State
117. Robert Cooper	South Gwinnett (Snellville, GA)	DT	6-2	377	Florida State
118. Cameron McGrone	Lawrence Central (Indianapolis, IN)	LB	6-1	215	Michigan

119. Ayodele Adeoye	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	LB	6-0	231	Texas
120. Coynis Miller	Jackson-Olin (Birmingham, Alabama)	DT	6-2	300	Auburn
121. Max Wray	Franklin (Franklin, TN)	OT	6-7	289	Ohio State
122. Alontae Taylor	Coffee County Central (Manchester, TN)	WR	6-0	184	Tennessee
123. Keondre Coburn	Westfield (Houston, TX)	DT	6-1	329	Texas
124. Dante Stills	Fairmont (Fairmont, WV)	DE	6-4	265	West Virginia
125. Junior Angilau	East (Salt Lake City, UT)	OT	6-6	297	Texas
126. L'Christian Smith	Wayne (Dayton, OH)	ATH	6-6	205	Ohio State
127. Jalen Hall	Long Beach Poly (Long Beach, CA)	WR	6-4	192	Oregon
128. Jayson Ademilola	St. Peters Prep (Jersey City, NJ)	DT	6-3	290	Notre Dame
129. Merlin Robertson	Junipero Serra (Gardena, CA)	LB	6-3	241	Arizona State
130. Kearis Jackson	Peach County (Fort Valley, GA)	WR	6-0	203	Georgia
131. Cameron Latu	Olympus (Salt Lake City, UT)	DE	6-5	236	Alabama
132. Tommy Brown	Mater Dei (Santa Ana, CA)	OG	6-7	313	Alabama
133. Brandon Kaho	Reno (Reno, NV)	LB	6-1	218	Washington
134. Aashari Crosswell	Long Beach Poly (Long Beach, CA)	S	6-1	185	Arizona State
135. Jalen Redmond	Midwest City (Oklahoma City, OK)	DE	6-4	233	Oklahoma
136. Greg Emerson	North Side (Jackson, TN)	DT	6-3	280	Tennessee
137. Steve Stephens	Edison (Fresno, CA)	S	6-0	185	Oregon
138. Chase Williams	Eleanor Roosevelt (Corona, CA)	CB	6-1	190	USC
139. Adrian Martinez	Clovis West (Fresno, CA)	QB	6-2	205	Nebraska
140. Tyler Shough	Hamilton (Chandler, AZ)	QB	6.5	187	Oregon
141. Rick Sandidge	Concord (Concord, NC)	DT	6-5	285	South Carolina
142. Justin Mascoll	South Gwinnett (Snellville, GA)	DE	6-4	237	Clemson
143. Xavier Williams	Chaminade-Madonna Prep (Hollywood, FL)	WR	6-1	190	Alabama
144. Azeez Ojulari	Marietta (Marietta, GA)	DE	6-4	224	Georgia
145. Jaelyn Duncan	St. Frances Academy (Owings, MD)	OT	6-6	300	Maryland
146. Josh Vann	Tucker (Tucker, GA)	WR	5-11	175	South Carolina
147. CJ Moore	Union (Tulsa, OK)	WR	6-5	175	Okla. State
148. Dylan Wonnum	Tucker (Tucker, GA)	OT	6-5	323	South Carolina
149. Delone Scaife	Miami Southridge (Miami, FL)	OG	6-3	320	Miami (Fla.)
150. Zack Kuntz	Camp Hill (Camp Hill, PA)	TE	6-7	221	Penn State



Jalyn Armour-Davis

Delone Scaife

151. Dax Hollifield	Shelby (Shelby, NC)	LB	6-2	236	Virginia Tech
152. Harold Joiner	Mountain Brook (Birmingham, AL)	RB	6-3	218	Auburn
153. Colten Blanton	Cy Ranch (Cypress, TX)	OT	6-7	285	Texas A&M
154. Brian Hightower	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	WR	6-3	202	Miami (Fla.)
155. Raymond Scott	Narbonne (Harbor City, CA)	LB	6-2	220	USC
156. Julius Irvin	Servite (Anaheim, CA)	S	6-1	177	Washington
157. Warren Thompson	Armwood (Seffner, FL)	WR	6-3	200	Florida State
158. Smoke Monday	Carver (Atlanta, FL)	ATH	6-3	185	Auburn
159. Chase Cota	South Medford (Medford, OR)	WR	6.4	195	UCLA
160. Austin Fontaine	DeMatha Catholic (Hyattsville, MD)	DT	6-3	309	Maryland
161. Tre'Shaun Harrison	Garfield (Seattle, WA)	ATH	6-2	190	Florida State
162. Kyle Pitts	Archbishop Wood (Warminster, PA)	TE	6-6	235	Florida
163. Anthony Schwartz	American Heritage (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	WR	6-0	172	Auburn
164. Keaontay Ingram	Carthage (Carthage, TX)	RB	6-1	190	Texas
165. Jevon Holland	Bishop O'Dowd (Oakland, CA)	S	6-1	182	Oregon
166. Dallas Gant	St. John's Jesuit (Toledo, OH)	LB	6-3	225	Ohio State
167. Jack Tuttle	Mission Hills (San Marcos, CA)	QB	6-4	195	Utah
168. Mustapha Muhammad	Ridge Point (Missouri City, TX)	TE	6-4	235	Michigan
169. Adrian Jackson	Mullen (Denver, CO)	LB	6-2	210	Oregon
170. Myles Sims	Westlake (Atlanta, GA)	CB	6-3	173	Michigan
171. Spencer Sanders	Ryan (Denton, TX)	QB	6-2	190	Okla. State
172. Malik Heath	Callaway (Jackson, MS)	WR	6-3	205	Miss. State
173. Camron Davis	Miami Carol City (Opa Locka, FL)	RB	5-10	190	Miami (Fla.)
174. Xavier Peters	Lakota West (West Chester, OH)	LB	6-4	225	Florida State
175. Nadab Joseph	Miami Norland HS (Miami, FL)	CB	6-2	180	Georgia
176. Christian Barmore	Neumann Goretti (Philadelphia, PA)	DT	6-5	290	Alabama



Dax Hollifield

177. Devonta Jason	Landry-Walker (New Orleans, LA)	WR	6-3	211	Miss. State
178. Amari Burney	Calvary Christian (Clearwater, FL)	S	6-1	215	Florida
179. Isaah Crocker	Inderkum (Sacramento, CA)	WR	6-1	175	Oregon
180. Tre Turner	Northwest Guilford (Greensboro, NC)	WR	6-4	185	Virginia Tech
181. Dyami Brown	West Meckenburg (Charlotte, NC)	ATH	6-2	180	UNC
182. Bobby Brown	Lamar (Arlington, TX)	DT	6-4	282	Texas A&M
183. Jaquayln Crawford	Rockdale (Rockdale, TX)	ATH	5-10	161	Oklahoma
184. Gurvan Hall	Palm Beach Gardens (West Palm Beach, FL)	S	5-11	173	Miami (Fla.)
185. Seth Williams	Paul W Bryant (Cottondale, AL)	WR	6-3	212	Auburn
186. Joseph Ossai	Oak Ridge (Conroe, TX)	DE	6-4	220	Texas
187. Kyler Gordon	Archbishop Murphy (Everett, WA)	CB	5-11	177	Washington
188. Kalon Gervin	Cass Technical (Detroit, MI)	CB	5-11	180	Michigan St.
189. Atanza Vongor	South Grand Prairie (Grand Prairie, TX)	S	6-1	200	TCU



Brian Hightower

190. Max Wright	Taylor (Katy, TX)	DE	6-4	270	Texas A&M
191. Alim McNeill	Sanderson (Raleigh, NC)	DT	6-2	272	NC State
192. Jahan Dotson	Nazareth (Nazareth, PA)	WR	5-11	165	Penn State
193. Cameron Jurgens	Beatrice (Beatrice, NE)	TE	6-3	240	Nebraska
194. Marquan McCall	Oak Park (Oak Park, MI)	OG	6-4	320	Kentucky
195. Trey Dean	Dutchtown (Hampton, GA)	S	6-2	180	Florida
196. Tommy Bush	Samuel Clemens (Schertz, TX)	WR	6-5	191	Georgia
197. Zakoby McClain	Valdosta (Valdosta, GA)	LB	6-0	205	Auburn
198. Jarell Cherry	Carter (Dallas, TX)	DE	6-3	224	LSU
199. Kwantel Raines	Aliquippa (Aliquippa, PA)	S	6-3	200	West Virginia
200. Gilbert Frierson	Coral Gables Senior (Miami, FL)	CB	6-1	185	Miami (Fla.)
201. Dameon Pierce	Bainbridge (Bainbridge, GA)	RB	5-11	205	Florida
202. Asa Martin	Austin (Decatur, AL)	RB	6-0	200	Auburn
203. Elijah Moore	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	WR	5-11	181	Ole Miss
204. Joe Milton	Olympia (Orlando, FL)	QB	6-6	230	Michigan
205. DaShaun White	Richland (North Richland Hills, TX)	LB	6-1	222	Oklahoma
206. Dakereon Joyner	Fort Dorchester (North Charleston, SC)	QB	6-2	206	South Carolina
207. Maurice Washington	Trinity Christian School (Cedar Hill, TX)	RB	6-1	190	Nebraska
208. Sam Taimani	East (Salt Lake City, UT)	OG	6-2	320	Washington
209. Jaycee Horn	Alpharetta (Alpharetta, GA)	CB	6-0	190	South Carolina
210. Mike Jones Jr.	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	LB	6-0	228	Clemson
211. Will Mallory	Providence (Jacksonville, FL)	TE	6-5	207	Miami (Fla.)
212. Austin Osborne	Mission Viejo (Mission Viejo, CA)	WR	6-2	188	Washington
213. Andrew Chatfield	American Heritage (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	DE	6-2	221	Florida
214. Mychale Salahuddin	Woodson H.D. (Washington, DC)	RB	5-10	193	Pitt
215. Braden Lenzy	Tigard (Portland, OR)	ATH	6-0	175	Notre Dame
216. Calvin Avery	Bishop Dunne (Dallas, TX)	DT	6-2	310	Illinois
217. K'Vaughan Pope	Dinwiddle County (Dinwiddle, VA)	LB	6-2	210	Ohio State
218. Curtis Dunlap	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	OG	6-4	368	Minnesota
219. Javontae Jean-Baptiste	Bergen Catholic (Oradell, NJ)	LB	6-5	215	Ohio State
220. Nik Bonitto	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	LB	6-3	204	Oklahoma
221. Sevyn Banks	Jones (Orlando, FL)	CB	6-1	180	Ohio State
222. Malcolm Lamar	Armwood (Seffner, FL)	DE	6-5	250	Florida State
223. Abdul-Malik McClain	J Serra Catholic (San Juan Capistrano, CA)	DE	6-4	230	USC
224. Pat Freiermuth	Brooks School (North Andover, MA)	TE	6-5	250	Penn State
225. Jordan Moore	Yoakum (Yoakum, TX)	S	5-11	192	Texas A&M

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226. Solomon Enis	North Canyon (Phoenix, AZ)	WR	6-4	190	Utah
227. Malcolm Epps	Dekaney (Houston, TX)	TE	6-6	218	Texas
228. Master Teague	Blackman (Murfreesboro, TN)	RB	5-11	210	Ohio State
229. Rondale Moore	Trinity (Louisville, KY)	WR	5-9	174	Purdue
230. Jairus Brents	Waggener Traditional (Louisville, KY)	CB	5-10	178	Louisville
231. Isaiah Bolden	Wesley Chapel (Zephyrhills, FL)	CB	6-2	175	Florida State
232. Chris Murray	Mater Dei (Santa Ana, CA)	OG	6-3	300	UCLA
233. Frederick Scruggs	Cathedral Prep (Erie, PA)	OC	6-3	270	Penn State
234. Gerry Bohanon	Earle (Earle, AR)	QB	6-3	218	Baylor
235. Jack West	Saraland (Saraland, AL)	QB	6-4	217	Stanford
236. Trevor Trout	Chaminade (St. Louis, MO)	DT	6-3	315	USC
237. BJ Hanspard	DeSoto (DeSoto, TX)	ATH	6-0	170	Baylor
238. Jesse Luketa	Mercyhurst Preparatory School (Erie, PA)	LB	6-3	238	Penn State
239. Amari Gainer	Lawton Chiles (Tallahassee, FL)	LB	6-3	204	Florida State
240. Robert Hicks	Miami Central (Miami, FL)	LB	6-0	237	Louisville
241. Michael Wilson	Chaminade (West Hills, CA)	WR	6-2	180	Stanford
242. Divaad Wilson	Northwestern (Miami, FL)	CB	6-0	180	Georgia



243. Chasen Hines	Marshall (Marshall, TX)	DT	6-3	335	LSU
244. Spencer Webb	Christian Brothers (Sacramento, CA)	TE	6-5	235	Oregon
245. Alston Orji	Rockwall (Rockwall, TX)	LB	6-2	230	Vanderbilt
246. Steven Jones	Chaparral (Temecula, CA)	OG	6-5	340	Oregon
247. Cameron Rising	Newbury Park (Newbury, CA)	QB	6-2	209	Texas
248. Trey Lowe	Jesuit (Portland, OR)	RB	5-7	174	Washington
249. Tanner Mordecai	Midway (Waco, TX)	QB	6-3	213	Oklahoma
250. Trenton Gillison	Pickerington Central (Pickerington, Ohio)	TE	6-5	220	Mich. State
251. Bo Calvert	Oaks Christian (Westlake Village, CA)	LB	6.4	218	UCLA
252. Dawson Jaramillo	Lake Oswego Senior (Lake Oswego, OR)	OT	6-5	295	Oregon
253. Tank Jenkins	Park Crossing (Montgomery, AL)	OG	6-3	325	Texas A&M
254. Jeremiah Martin	Cajon (San Bernardino, CA)	DE	6-5	240	Texas A&M
255. Stephan Blaylock	St. John Bosco (Bellflower, CA)	S	5-10	185	UCLA
256. Brant Lawless	Nashville Christian School (Nashville, TN)	DT	6-3	285	Tennessee
257. Jamien Sherwood	Jensen Beach (Jensen Beach, FL)	S	6-2	195	Auburn
258. Lyn-J Dixon	Taylor County (Butler, GA)	RB	5-11	178	Clemson
259. Cleveland Reed	Fort Meade (Fort Meade, FL)	OG	6-3	327	Miami (Fla.)
260. Michael Ezeike	Colony (Ontario, CA)	TE	6-5	220	UCLA

261. Jashaun Corbin	Rockledge (Rockledge, FL)	RB	6-0	191	Texas A&M
262. Andres Fox	Mobile Christian School (Mobile, AL)	DE	6-4	245	Stanford
263. Warren Ericson	North Gwinnett (Duluth, GA)	OC	6-4	290	Georgia
264. Camron Johnson	Brentwood Academy (Brentwood, TN)	WR	6-1	182	Vanderbilt
265. Darrell Simpson	Northwest (Justin, TX)	OT	6-7	336	Oklahoma
266. Joseph Scates	Dunbar (Dayton, OH)	WR	6-3	180	Iowa State
267. Tevailance Hunt	Texas High (Texarkana, TX)	WR	6-2	185	TCU
268. Jalen Mayfield	Catholic Central (Grand Rapids, MI)	OT	6-5	273	Michigan
269. Kingsley Enagbare	Hapeville Charter (Atlanta, GA)	DE	6-4	257	South Carolina
270. Nick Tarburton	Pennridge (Perkasie, PA)	LB	6.4	242	Penn State
271. James Foster	Lanier(Montgomery, AL)	QB	6-3	210	Texas A&M
272. Anthony Williams	Hahnville (Boutte, LA)	RB	5-9	175	Kansas
273. Corione Harris	Landry-Walker (New Orleans, LA)	CB	6-0	165	Kansas
274. Daniel George	Oxon Hill (Oxon Hill, MD)	WR	6-2	201	Penn State
275. Quincy Patterson	Solorio Academy (Chicago, IL)	QB	6-4	232	Virginia Tech
276. Christian Tutt	Thomson (Thomson, GA)	CB	5-11	193	Auburn
277. Micah Baskerville	Evangel Christian (Shreveport, LA)	LB	6-2	215	LSU
278. Trenell Troutman	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	S	5-10	188	Louisville
279. Jamal Elliott	Hillside (Durham, NC)	RB	5-10	180	Oregon
280. Taiyon Palmer	Archer (Lawerenceville, GA)	CB	6-0	178	NC State
281. Michael Harris	Tucker (Tucker, GA)	LB	6-2	213	Auburn
282. Thomas Booker	Gilman (Baltimore, MD)	DE	6-5	290	Stanford
283. George Takacs	Gulf Coast (Naples, FL)	TE	6-7	242	Notre Dame
284. Davin Cotton	Evangel Christian Academy (Shreveport, LA)	DT	6-1	262	LSU
285. Avery Jones	Havelock (Havelock, NC)	OG	6-4	275	UNC
286. Lawrence Keys III	McDonogh 35 (New Orleans, LA)	WR	5-11	160	Notre Dame
287. Elijah Wade	Arbor View (Las Vegas, NV)	DE	6-5	240	UCLA
288. Kyle Phillips	San Marcos (San Marcos, CA)	WR	5-11	176	UCLA
289. Cam'ron Jones	Mansfield (Mansfield, TX)	S	6-0	200	Nebraska
290. Camren McDonald	Long Beach Poly (Long Beach, CA)	TE	6-4	220	Florida State
291. Casey Thompson	Newcastle (Newcastle, OK)	QB	6-1	184	Texas
292. Will Craig	Granite Bay (Granite Bay, CA)	OT	6-5	265	California
293. Matthew Bauer	Cathedral Prep (Erie, PA)	LB	6-3	222	Notre Dame
294. Kwatrivous Johnson	Greenwood (Greenwood, MS)	OT	6-8	338	Miss. State
295. Daniel Faalele	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	OT	6-8	400	Minnesota
296. Devin O'Rourke	Lincoln-Way East (Frankfort, IL)	DE	6-6	240	Northwestern
297. David Reese	Vero Beach (Fort Pierce, FL)	LB	6-3	213	Florida
298. Fabian Franklin	Hattiesburg (Hattiesburg, MS)	RB	5-11	207	TCU
299. Leonard Taylor	Springfield (Springfield, OH)	TE	6-6	246	Cincinnati
300. Reese Moore	Seminole (Seminole, TX)	OT	6-6	280	Texas





JT Daniels

Quarterbacks

1. Trevor Lawrence	Cartersville (Cartersville, GA)	6-6	208	Clemson
2. Justin Fields	Harrison (Kennesaw, GA)	6-3	221	Georgia
3. JT Daniels	Mater Dei (Santa Ana, CA)	6-2	205	USC
4. Dorian Thompson-Robinson	Bishop Gorman (Las Vegas, NV)	6-2	195	UCLA
5. Justin Rogers	Parkway (Bossier City, LA)	6-4	210	TCU
6. Tanner McKee	Centennial (Corona, CA)	6-6	220	Stanford
7. Matt Corral	Long Beach Poly (Long Beach, CA)	6-2	202	Ole Miss
8. Jarren Williams	Central Gwinnett (Lawrenceville, GA)	6-2	206	Miami (Fla.)
9. Phil Jurkovec	Pine-Richland (Gibsonia, PA)	6-5	215	Notre Dame
10. Emory Jones	Heard County (Franklin, GA)	6-3	195	Florida
11. Colson Yankoff	Coeur d'Alene (Coeur d'Alene, ID)	6-4	204	Washington
12. Jacob Sirmon	Bothell (Bothell, WA)	6-4	227	Washington
13. Adrian Martinez	Clovis West (Fresno, CA)	6-2	205	Nebraska
14. Tyler Shough	Hamilton (Chandler, AZ)	6.5	187	Oregon
15. Jack Tuttle	Mission Hills (San Marcos, CA)	6-4	195	Utah
16. Spencer Sanders	Ryan (Denton, TX)	6-2	190	Oklahoma State
17. Joe Milton	Olympia (Orlando, FL)	6-6	230	Michigan
18. Dakereon Joyner	Fort Dorchester (North Charleston, SC)	6-2	206	South Carolina
19. Gerry Bohanon	Earle (Earle, AR)	6-3	218	Baylor
20. Jack West	Saraland (Saraland, AL)	6-4	217	Stanford
21. Cameron Rising	Newbury Park (Newbury, CA)	6-2	209	Texas
22. Tanner Mordecai	Midway (Waco, TX)	6-3	213	Oklahoma
23. James Foster	Lanier(Montgomery, AL)	6-3	210	Texas A&M
24. Quincy Patterson	Solorio Academy (Chicago, IL)	6-4	232	Virginia Tech
25. Casey Thompson	Newcastle (Newcastle, OK)	6-1	184	Texas
26. Matthew Baldwin	Lake Travis (Austin, TX)	6-3	195	Ohio State
27. Jace Ruder	Norton (Norton, KS)	6-3	205	North Carolina
28. Brevin White	Paraclete (Lancaster, CA)	6-2	185	Princeton
29. Connor Noland	Greenwood (Greenwood, AR)	6-3	205	Arkansas
30. Jalen Mayden	Sachse (Sachse, TX)	6-2	215	Mississippi State
31. Cammon Cooper	Lehi (Lehi, UT)	6-4	202	Washington State
32. Devin Leary	Timber Creek (Sicklerville, NJ)	6-2	189	NC State
33. Theo Day	Divine Child (Dearborn, MI)	6-5	197	Michigan State
34. Artur Sitkowski	IMG Academy (Old Bridge, NJ)	6-5	215	Rutgers
35. Spencer Petras	Marin Catholic (Greenbrae, CA)	6-5	207	Iowa
36. Allan Walters	The Peddle School (Highstown, NJ)	6-1	200	Vanderbilt
37. Holton Ahlers	DH Conley (Greenville, NC)	6-4	235	East Carolina
38. Michael Penix	Tampa Bay Tech (Tampa, FL)	6-2	195	Indiana
39. Jack Plummer	Gilbert (Gilbert, AZ)	6-5	212	Purdue
40. Gunnar Holmberg	Heritage (Wake Forest, NC)	6-3	180	Duke
41. Kevin Doyle	St. John's College HS (Washington, DC)	6-4	210	Arizona
42. Jamarye Joiner	Cienega (Tucson, AZ)	6-3	205	Arizona
43. Woodrow Lowe III	Central (Bolivar, TN)	6-3	185	West Virginia
44. Carter Bradley	Providence (Jacksonville, FL)	6-3	208	Toledo
45. Brennan Armstrong	Shelby (Shelby, OH)	6-2	210	Virginia
46. JT Shrout	William S. Hart Senior (Newhall, CA)	6-3	190	Tennessee
47. Kaleb Eleby	Pattonville Sr. (Maryland Heights, MO)	6-2	205	Western Michigan
48. Will Levis	Xavier (Middletown, CT)	6-4	222	Penn State
49. Tyler DeSue	Bishop Sullivan Catholic (Virginia Beach, VA)	6-1	185	Maryland
50. Cade Fortin	North Gwinnett (Suwanee, GA)	6-2	207	North Carolina

Running Backs

1. Zamir White	Scotland County (Laurinburg, NC)	6-1	220	Georgia
2. Lorenzo Lingard	University (Orange City, FL)	6-0	190	Miami (Fla.)
3. Ricky Slade	C.D. Hylton (Woodbridge, VA)	5-9	185	Penn State
4. Jaelen Gill	Westerville South (Westerville, OH)	6-1	182	Ohio State
5. James Cook	Northwestern (Miami, FL)	6-0	181	Georgia
6. Brian Snead	Armwood (Seffner, FL)	5-11	200	Ohio State
7. T.J. Pledger	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	5-8	190	Oklahoma
8. Ricky Person	Heritage (Wake Forest, NC)	6-2	202	NC State
9. Harold Joiner	Mountain Brook (Birmingham, AL)	6-3	218	Auburn
10. Keaontay Ingram	Carthage (Carthage, TX)	6-1	190	Texas
11. Camron Davis	Miami Carol City (Opa Locka, FL)	5-10	190	Miami (Fla.)
12. Dameon Pierce	Bainbridge (Bainbridge, GA)	5-11	205	Florida
13. Asa Martin	Austin (Decatur, AL)	6-0	200	Auburn
14. Maurice Washington	Trinity Christian School (Cedar Hill, TX)	6-1	190	Nebraska
15. Mychale Salahuddin	Woodson H.D. (Washington, DC)	5-10	193	Pitt
16. Master Teague	Blackman (Murfreesboro, TN)	5-11	210	Ohio State
17. Trey Lowe	Jesuit (Portland, OR)	5-7	174	Washington
18. Lyn-J Dixon	Taylor County (Butler, GA)	5-11	178	Clemson
19. Jashaun Corbin	Rockledge (Rockledge, FL)	6-0	191	Texas A&M
20. Anthony Williams	Hahnville (Boutte, LA)	5-9	175	Kansas
21. Jamal Elliott	Hillside (Durham, NC)	5-10	180	Oregon
22. Fabian Franklin	Hattiesburg (Hattiesburg, MS)	5-11	207	TCU
23. Markese Stepp	Cathedral (Indianapolis, IN)	6-0	228	USC
24. Shaun Shivers	Chaminade-Madonna Prep (Hollywood, FL)	5-7	174	Auburn
25. Craig Williams	Crosby (Crosby, TX)	5-9	170	Baylor
26. Chris Curry	Lehigh Senior (Lehigh Acres, FL)	5-11	200	LSU
27. Jerome Ford	Armwood (Seffner, FL)	5-11	195	Alabama
28. Jeremy Banks	Cordova (Cordova, TN)	6-2	215	Tennessee
29. Kazmeir Allen	Tulare Union (Tulare, CA)	5-10	185	UCLA
30. Anthony Grant	Buford (Buford, GA)	5-11	200	Florida State
31. Tavion Thomas	Dunbar (Dayton, OH)	6-2	225	Cincinnati
32. Ronnie Walker	Hopewell (Hopewell, VA)	5-10	190	Indiana
33. Devon Lawrence	Wake Forest (Wake Forest, NC)	5-11	195	North Carolina
34. Nakia Watson	Westlake (Austin, TX)	5-11	212	Wisconsin
35. Slade Bolden	West Monroe (West Monroe, LA)	5-11	198	Alabama
36. Christian Turner	Buford (Buford, GA)	5-11	187	Michigan
37. Chris Brown	El Camino (Oceanside, CA)	6-1	218	California
38. Richard Newton	Palmdale (Palmdale, CA)	6-1	183	Washington
39. Deshaun Fenwick	Braden River (Bradenton, FL)	6-3	208	South Carolina
40. Johnny Adams	Ben Davis (Indianapolis, IN)	5-11	196	California
41. Max Borghi	Pomona (Arvada, CO)	5-10	195	Wash. State
42. Malone Mataele	Catholic (Rancho Santa Margarita, CA)	5-11	170	Utah
43. Lavonte Valentine	Melbourne Central Catholic (Melbourne, FL)	6-0	188	South Carolina
44. Jahmir Smith	Lee County (Sanford, NC)	6-0	205	Notre Dame
45. Charles Strong	Union County (Lake Butler, FL)	6-1	220	Texas A&M
46. Nolan Edmonds	Alpharetta (Atlanta, GA)	5-11	206	Minnesota
47. Brock Sturges	Allen (Allen, TX)	5-10	200	Arizona State
48. Isaih Pacheco	Vineland South (Vineland, NJ)	5-11	190	Rutgers
49. Tyrone Tracy	Decatur Central (Indianapolis, IN)	6-0	185	Iowa
50. Andrew VanBuren	Chaminade (West Hills, CA)	6-1	217	Boise State



Lorenzo Lingard

AP

Tight Ends

1. Brevin Jordan	Bishop Gorman (Las Vegas, NV)	6-3	250	Miami (Fla.)
2. Jeremy Ruckert	Lindenhurst (Lindenhurst, NY)	6-6	238	Ohio State
3. Luke Ford	Carterville (Carterville, IL)	6-6	248	Georgia
4. Zack Kuntz	Camp Hill (Camp Hill, PA)	6-7	221	Penn State
5. Kyle Pitts	Archbishop Wood (Warminster, PA)	6-6	235	Florida
6. Mustapha Muhammad	Ridge Point (Missouri City, TX)	6-4	235	Michigan
7. Cameron Jurgens	Beatrice (Beatrice, NE)	6-3	240	Nebraska
8. Will Mallory	Providence (Jacksonville, FL)	6-5	207	Miami (Fla.)
9. Pat Freiermuth	Brooks School (North Andover, MA)	6-5	250	Penn State
10. Malcolm Epps	Dekaney (Houston, TX)	6-6	218	Texas
11. Spencer Webb	Christian Brothers (Sacramento, CA)	6-5	235	Oregon
12. Trenton Gillison	Pickerington Central (Pickerington, Ohio)	6-5	220	Michigan State
13. Michael Ezeike	Colony (Ontario, CA)	6-5	220	UCLA
14. George Takacs	Gulf Coast (Naples, FL)	6-7	242	Notre Dame
15. Camren McDonald	Long Beach Poly (Long Beach, CA)	6-4	220	Florida State
16. Leonard Taylor	Springfield (Springfield, OH)	6-6	246	Cincinnati
17. John FitzPatrick	Marist School (Atlanta, GA)	6-6	230	Georgia
18. McCallan Castles	South Tahoe (South Lake Tahoe, CA)	6-5	230	California
19. Josh Whyle	LaSalle (Cincinnati, OH)	6-6	215	Cincinnati
20. Tyneil Hopper	Roswell (Roswell, GA)	6-3	225	Boise State

Wide Receivers

1. Justin Shorter	South Brunswick (Momnouth Junction, NJ)	6-4	213	Penn State
2. Amon-Ra St. Brown	Mater Del (Anaheim, CA)	6-0	191	USC
3. Terrace Marshall	Parkway (Bossier City, LA)	6-3	192	LSU
4. Derion Kendrick	South Pointe (Rock Hill, SC)	6-1	184	Clemson
5. Jaylen Waddle	Episcopal (Bellaire, TX)	5-10	175	Alabama
6. Devon Williams	Antelope Valley (Lancaster, CA)	6-4	200	USC
7. Justyn Ross	Central (Phenix City, AL)	6-4	201	Clemson
8. Jordyn Adams	Green Hope (Cary,NC)	6-2	175	UNC
9. Marquis Spiker	Murrieta Valley (Murrieta, CA)	6-3	180	Washington
10. Brennan Eagles	Alief Taylor (Houston, TX)	6-4	214	Texas
11. Mark Pope	Miami Southridge (Hialeah, FL)	6-1	175	Miami (Fla.)
12. Jacob Copeland	Escambia (Pensacola, FL)	6-0	192	Florida
13. Kamryn Babb	Christian Brothers (St. Louis, MO)	6-1	191	Ohio State
14. Kevin Austin	North Broward Prep (Pompano Beach, FL)	6-3	198	Notre Dame
15. Ja'Marr Chase	Archbishop Rummel (Metairie, LA)	6-1	195	LSU
16. Justin Watkins	East Ridge (Clermont, FL)	5-11	172	Florida
17. Matthew Hill	Brookwood (Snellville, GA)	6-2	185	Auburn
18. Jalen Preston	Manvel (Manvel, TX)	6-2	212	Texas A&M
19. Joshua Moore	Yoakum (Yoakum, TX)	6-1	170	Texas
20. Al'Vonte Woodard	Lamar (Houston, TX)	6-1	193	Texas
21. Alontae Taylor	Coffee County Central (Manchester, TN)	6-0	184	Tennessee
22. Jalen Hall	Long Beach Poly (Long Beach, CA)	6-4	192	Oregon
23. Kearis Jackson	Peach County (Fort Valley, GA)	6-0	203	Georgia
24. Xavier Williams	Chaminade-Madonna Prep (Hollywood, FL)	6-1	190	Alabama
25. Josh Vann	Tucker (Tucker, GA)	5-11	175	South Carolina
26. CJ Moore	Union (Tulsa, OK)	6-5	175	Okla. State
27. Brian Hightower	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	6-3	202	Miami (Fla.)
28. Warren Thompson	Armwood (Seffner, FL)	6-3	200	Florida State
29. Chase Cota	South Medford (Medford, OR)	6.4	195	UCLA
30. Anthony Schwartz	American Heritage (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	6-0	172	Auburn
31. Malik Heath	Callaway (Jackson, MS)	6-3	205	Miss. State
32. Devonta Jason	Landry-Walker (New Orleans, LA)	6-3	211	Miss. State
33. Isaah Crocker	Inderkum (Sacramento, CA)	6-1	175	Oregon
34. Tre Turner	Northwest Guilford (Greensboro, NC)	6-4	185	Virginia Tech
35. Seth Williams	Paul W Bryant (Cottondale, AL)	6-3	212	Auburn
36. Jahan Dotson	Nazareth (Nazareth, PA)	5-11	165	Penn State
37. Tommy Bush	Samuel Clemens (Schertz, TX)	6-5	191	Georgia
38. Elijah Moore	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	5-11	181	Ole Miss
39. Austin Osborne	Mission Viejo (Mission Viejo, CA)	6-2	188	Washington
40. Solomon Enis	North Canyon (Phoenix, AZ)	6-4	190	Utah
41. Rondale Moore	Trinity (Louisville, KY)	5-9	174	Purdue
42. Michael Wilson	Chaminade (West Hills, CA)	6-2	180	Stanford
43. Camron Johnson	Brentwood Academy (Brentwood, TN)	6-1	182	Vanderbilt
44. Joseph Scates	Dunbar (Dayton, OH)	6-3	180	Iowa State
45. Tevailance Hunt	Texas High (Texarkana, TX)	6-2	185	TCU
46. Daniel George	Oxon Hill (Oxon Hill, MD)	6-2	201	Penn State
47. Lawrence Keys III	McDonogh 35 (New Orleans, LA)	5-11	160	Notre Dame
48. Kyle Phillips	San Marcos (San Marcos, CA)	5-11	176	UCLA
49. Erik Ezukanma	Timber Creek (Keller, TX)	6-2	183	Texas Tech
50. Joshua Fleeks	Cedar Hill (Cedar Hill, TX)	6-0	170	Baylor

Offensive Linemen

1. Nicholas Petit-Frere	Berkeley Prep (Tampa, FL)	6-6	272	Ohio State
2. Jamaree Salyer	Pace Academy (Atlanta, GA)	6-4	342	Georgia
3. Jackson Carman	Fairfield (Fairfield, OH)	6-6	330	Clemson
4. Cade Mays	Knoxville Catholic (Knoxville, TN)	6-6	318	Georgia
5. Brey Walker	Westmoore (Moore, OK)	6-7	320	Oklahoma
6. William Barnes	Apopka (Apopka, FL)	6-4	325	UNC
7. Penei Sewell	Desert Hills (Saint George, Utah)	6-5	349	Oregon
8. Trey Hill	Houston County (Warner Robins, GA)	6-4	346	Georgia
9. Rasheed Walker	North Point (Waldorf, MD)	6-6	290	Penn State
10. Matthew Jones	Erasmus Hall (Brooklyn, NY)	6-4	300	Ohio State
11. Richard Gouraige	Cambridge Christian School (Tampa, FL)	6-5	271	Florida
12. Justin Dedich	Chaparral (Temecula, CA)	6-2	290	USC
13. Emil Ekiyor	Cathedral (Indianapolis, IN)	6-2	322	Alabama
14. Nana Asiedu	North Stafford (Stafford, VA)	6-5	265	Penn State
15. Max Wray	Franklin (Franklin, TN)	6-7	289	Ohio State
16. Junior Angilau	East (Salt Lake City, UT)	6-6	297	Texas
17. Tommy Brown	Mater Dei (Santa Ana, CA)	6-7	313	Alabama
18. Jaelyn Duncan	St. Frances Academy (Owings, MD)	6-6	300	Maryland
19. Dylan Wonnum	Tucker (Tucker, GA)	6-5	323	South Carolina
20. Delone Scaife	Miami Southridge (Miami, FL)	6-3	320	Miami (Fla.)
21. Colten Blanton	Cy Ranch (Cypress, TX)	6-7	285	Texas A&M
22. Marquan McCall	Oak Park (Oak Park, MI)	6-4	320	Kentucky
23. Sam Taimani	East (Salt Lake City, UT)	6-2	320	Washington
24. Curtis Dunlap	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	6-4	368	Minnesota
25. Chris Murray	Mater Dei (Santa Ana, CA)	6-3	300	UCLA
26. Frederick Scruggs	Cathedral Prep (Erie, PA)	6-3	270	Penn State
27. Steven Jones	Chaparral (Temecula, CA)	6-5	340	Oregon
28. Dawson Jaramillo	Lake Oswego Senior (Lake Oswego, OR)	6-5	295	Oregon
29. Tank Jenkins	Park Crossing (Montgomery, AL)	6-3	325	Texas A&M
30. Cleveland Reed	Fort Meade (Fort Meade, FL)	6-3	327	Miami (Fla.)
31. Warren Ericson	North Gwinnett (Duluth, GA)	6-4	290	Georgia
32. Darrell Simpson	Northwest (Justin, TX)	6-7	336	Oklahoma
33. Jalen Mayfield	Catholic Central (Grand Rapids, MI)	6-5	273	Michigan
34. Avery Jones	Havelock (Havelock, NC)	6-4	275	UNC
35. Will Craig	Granite Bay (Granite Bay, CA)	6-5	265	California
36. Kwatrivous Johnson	Greenwood (Greenwood, MS)	6-8	338	Miss. State
37. Daniel Faalele	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	6-8	400	Minnesota
38. Reese Moore	Seminole (Seminole, TX)	6-6	280	Texas
39. Christian Meadows	Macon County (Montezuma, GA)	6-3	330	Florida State
40. Rafiti Ghirmai	Wakeland (Frisco, TX)	6-4	290	Texas
41. Darian Kinnard	St. Ignatius (Cleveland, OH)	6-7	336	Kentucky
42. Ryan Hayes	Traverse City West (Traverse City, MI)	6-7	252	Michigan
43. Verdis Brown	IMG Academy (Chicago, IL)	6-3	294	Illinois
44. Tyrone Sampson Jr.	East English Village Prep (Detroit, MI)	6-3	295	Fresno State
45. Jovaughn Gwyn	Harding University (Charlotte, NC)	6-2	291	South Carolina
46. Connor Galvin	Katy (Katy, TX)	6-6	260	Baylor
47. Finn Dirstine	Lawrence Academy (Acton, MA)	6-5	320	Boston College
48. Luke Matthews	Elkins (Missouri City, TX)	6-4	305	Texas A&M
49. Jarrett Patterson	Mission Viejo (Mission Viejo, CA)	6-5	285	Notre Dame
50. Jerome Carvin	Cordova (Cordova, TN)	6-4	330	Tennessee

Defensive Linemen

1. Xavier Thomas	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	6-3	260	Clemson
2. Eyabi Anoma	St. Frances Academy (Baltimore, MD)	6-5	235	Alabama
3. Micah Parsons	Harrisburg (Harrisburg, PA)	6-3	235	Penn State
4. KJ Henry	West Forsyth (Clemmons, NC)	6-6	235	Clemson
5. Taron Vincent	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	6-2	285	Ohio State
6. Brenton Cox	Stockbridge (Stockbridge, GA)	6-5	247	Georgia
7. Tyreke Smith	Cleveland Heights (Cleveland, OH)	6-3	204	Ohio State
8. Nesta Silvera	American Heritage (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	6-2	308	Miami (Fla.)
9. Tommy Togiai	Highland (Pocatello, ID)	6-3	290	Ohio State
10. Ronnie Perkins	Lutheran North (St. Louis, MO)	6-3	256	Oklahoma
11. Michael Thompson	Parkway North (St. Louis, MO)	6-4	291	Oklahoma
12. Stephon Wynn	IMG Academy (Anderson, SC)	6-4	308	Alabama
13. Jayson Oweh	Blair Academy (Blairstown, NJ)	6-5	236	Penn State
14. PJ Mustipher	McDonogh School (Owings Mills, MD)	6.5	290	Penn State
15. Tyler Friday	Don Bosco Prep (Ramsey, NJ)	6-3	263	Ohio State
16. Ron Tatum	Putnam City (Oklahoma City, OK)	6.5	269	Oklahoma
17. Josh Belk	Lewisville (Richburg, SC)	6-3	309	Clemson
18. Tuli Letuligasenoa	De La Salle (Concord, CA)	6-1	338	Washington
19. Jordan Davis	Southwind (Memphis, TN)	6-5	238	Alabama
20. Aidan Hutchinson	Divine Child (Dearborn, MI)	6-6	260	Michigan
21. Robert Cooper	South Gwinnett (Snellville, GA)	6-2	377	Florida State
22. Coynis Miller	Jackson-Olin (Birmingham, Alabama)	6-2	300	Auburn
23. Keondre Coburn	Westfield (Houston, TX)	6-1	329	Texas
24. Dante Stills	Fairmont (Fairmont, WV)	6-4	265	West Virginia
25. Jayson Ademilola	St. Peters Prep (Jersey City, NJ)	6-3	290	Notre Dame
26. Cameron Latu	Olympus (Salt Lake City, UT)	6-5	236	Alabama
27. Jalen Redmond	Midwest City (Oklahoma City, OK)	6-4	233	Oklahoma
28. Greg Emerson	North Side (Jackson, TN)	6-3	280	Tennessee
29. Rick Sandidge	Concord (Concord, NC)	6-5	285	South Carolina
30. Justin Mascoll	South Gwinnett (Snellville, GA)	6-4	237	Clemson
31. Azeez Ojulari	Marietta (Marietta, GA)	6-4	224	Georgia
32. Austin Fontaine	DeMatha Catholic (Hyattsville, MD)	6-3	309	Maryland
33. Christian Barmore	Neumann Goretti (Philadelphia, PA)	6-5	290	Alabama
34. Bobby Brown	Lamar (Arlington, TX)	6-4	282	Texas A&M
35. Joseph Ossai	Oak Ridge (Conroe, TX)	6-4	220	Texas
36. Max Wright	Taylor (Katy, TX)	6-4	270	Texas A&M
37. Alim McNeill	Sanderson (Raleigh, NC)	6-2	272	NC State
38. Jarell Cherry	Carter (Dallas, TX)	6-3	224	LSU
39. Andrew Chatfield	American Heritage (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	6-2	221	Florida
40. Calvin Avery	Bishop Dunne (Dallas, TX)	6-2	310	Illinois
41. Malcolm Lamar	Armwood (Seffner, FL)	6-5	250	Florida State
42. Abdul-Malik McClain	J Serra Catholic (San Juan Capistrano, CA)	6-4	230	USC
43. Trevor Trout	Chaminade (St. Louis, MO)	6-3	315	USC
44. Chasen Hines	Marshall (Marshall, TX)	6-3	335	LSU
45. Jeremiah Martin	Cajon (San Bernardino, CA)	6-5	240	Texas A&M
46. Brant Lawless	Nashville Christian School (Nashville, TN)	6-3	285	Tennessee
47. Andres Fox	Mobile Christian School (Mobile, AL)	6-4	245	Stanford
48. Kingsley Enagbare	Hapeville Charter (Atlanta, GA)	6-4	257	South Carolina
49. Thomas Booker	Gilman (Baltimore, MD)	6-5	290	Stanford
50. Davin Cotton	Evangel Christian Academy (Shreveport, LA)	6-1	262	LSU
51. Elijah Wade	Arbor View (Las Vegas, NV)	6-5	240	UCLA
52. Devin O'Rourke	Lincoln-Way East (Frankfort, IL)	6-6	240	Northwestern
53. Dare Rosenthal	Ferriday (Ferriday, LA)	6-7	327	LSU
54. Kayode Oladele	Champagnat Catholic-Hialeah (Miami, FL)	6-4	235	Auburn
55. Malik Langham	Lee (Huntsville, AL)	6-6	269	Florida
56. Tahj Rice	Waggener Traditional (Louisville, KY)	6-2	320	Duke
57. Tate Wildeman	Legend (Parker, CO)	6-6	245	Nebraska
58. Dennis Briggs	Gateway (Kissimmee, FL)	6-4	252	Florida State
59. Tyler Manoa	St. Francis (Mountain View, CA)	6-5	260	UCLA
60. Caleb Tannor	Miller Grove (Lithonia, GA)	6-3	225	Nebraska
61. Jaden Crumedy	Oak Grove (Hattiesburg, MS)	6-5	240	Miss. State
62. Draco Bynum	Wilsonville (Wilsonville, OR)	6-4	258	Washington
63. John Waggoner	Dowling Catholic (West Des Moines, IA)	6-5	230	Iowa
64. Moro Ojomo	Katy (Katy, TX)	6-3	280	Texas
65. Judge Culpepper	Plant (Tampa, FL)	6-5	256	Penn State
66. Chris Collins	Benedictine (Richmond, VA)	6-5	212	North Carolina
67. Tyler Linderbaum	Solon (Solon, IA)	6-2	255	Iowa
68. Jordan Davis	Mallard Creek (Charlotte, NC)	6-6	330	Georgia
69. Jalen Cunningham	Saint Clair County (Odenville, AL)	6-6	345	Ole Miss
70. Fabien Lovett	Olive Branch (Olive Branch, MS)	6-3	285	Miss. State
71. Aeneas Hawkins	Archbishop Moeller (Cincinnati, OH)	6-3	265	Penn State
72. Malik Vann	Fairfield (Fairfield, OH)	6-3	270	Cincinnati
73. Jordan Kelley	Union (Tulsa, OK)	6-3	293	Oklahoma
74. James Williams	Callaway (Jackson, MS)	6-5	285	Ole Miss
75. Gregory Rousseau	Champagnat Catholic (Hialeah, FL)	6-6	222	Miami

Linebackers

1. Palaie Gaoteote	Bishop Gorman (Las Vegas, NV)	6-2	235	USC
2. Adam Anderson	Rome (Rome, GA)	6-4	214	Georgia
3. Quay Walker	Crisp County (Cordele, GA)	6-4	236	Georgia
4. Teradja Mitchell	Bishop Sullivan Catholic (Virginia Beach, VA)	6-2	232	Ohio State
5. JJ Peterson	Colquitt County (Moultrie, GA)	6-3	231	Tennessee
6. Payton Wilson	Orange (Hillsborough, NC)	6-4	225	NC State
7. Solomon Tuliaupupu	Mater Dei (Santa Ana, CA)	6-2	220	USC
8. Otis Reese	Lee County (Leesburg, GA)	6-4	206	Georgia
9. Shayne Simon	St. Peters Prep (Jersey City, NJ)	6-3	215	Notre Dame
10. Jack Lamb	Great Oak (Temecula, CA)	6-4	220	Notre Dame
11. Channing Tindall	Spring Valley (Columbia, SC)	6-2	213	Georgia
12. Cameron McGrone	Lawrence Central (Indianapolis, IN)	6-1	215	Michigan
13. Ayodele Adeoye	IMG Academy (St. Louis, MO)	6-0	231	Texas
14. Merlin Robertson	Junipero Serra (Gardena, CA)	6-3	241	Arizona State
15. Brandon Kaho	Reno (Reno, NV)	6-1	218	Washington
16. Dax Hollifield	Shelby (Shelby, NC)	6-2	236	Virginia Tech
17. Raymond Scott	Narbonne (Harbor City, CA)	6-2	220	USC
18. Dallas Grant	St. John's Jesuit (Toledo, OH)	6-3	225	Ohio State
19. Adrian Jackson	Mullen (Denver, CO)	6-2	210	Oregon
20. Xavier Peters	Lakota West (West Chester, OH)	6-4	225	Florida State
21. Zakoby McClain	Valdosta (Valdosta, GA)	6-0	205	Auburn
22. DaShaun White	Richland (North Richland Hills, TX)	6-1	222	Oklahoma
23. Mike Jones Jr.	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	6-0	228	Clemson
24. K'Vaughan Pope	Dinwiddle County (Dinwiddle, VA)	6-2	210	Ohio State
25. Javontae Jean-Baptiste	Bergen Catholic (Oradell, NJ)	6-5	215	Ohio State
26. Nik Bonitto	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	6-3	204	Oklahoma
27. Jesse Luketa	Mercyhurst Preparatory School (Erie, PA)	6-3	238	Penn State
28. Amari Gainer	Lawton Chiles (Tallahassee, FL)	6-3	204	Florida State
29. Robert Hicks	Miami Central (Miami, FL)	6-0	237	Louisville
30. Alston Orji	Rockwall (Rockwall, TX)	6-2	230	Vanderbilt
31. Bo Calvert	Oaks Christian (Westlake Village, CA)	6.4	218	UCLA
32. Nick Tarburton	Pennridge (Perkasie, PA)	6.4	242	Penn State
33. Micah Baskerville	Evangel Christian (Shreveport, LA)	6-2	215	LSU
34. Michael Harris	Tucker (Tucker, GA)	6-2	213	Auburn
35. Matthew Bauer	Cathedral Prep (Erie, PA)	6-3	222	Notre Dame
36. David Reese	Vero Beach (Fort Pierce, FL)	6-3	213	Florida
37. Kana'i Mauga	Waianae (Waianae, HI)	6-2	215	USC
38. Christopher Oats	Winton Woods (Cincinnati, OH)	6-4	215	Kentucky
39. Jack Sanborn	Lake Zurich (Lake Zurich, IL)	6-2	210	Wisconsin
40. Bumper Pool	Lovejoy (Lucas, TX)	6-3	213	Arkansas
41. Rosendo Louis	Deerfield Beach (Deerfield Beach, FL)	6-1	225	South Carolina
42. Damone Clark	Southern University Lab (Baton Rouge, LA)	6-3	218	LSU
43. Eli'jah Winston	Central Catholic (Portland, OR)	6-3	232	USC
44. Alan Tisdale	Page (Greensboro, NC)	6-3	208	Virginia Tech
45. Chad Bailey	Ridge Point (Missouri City, TX)	6-0	238	Missouri
46. Tennessee Pututau	East (Salt Lake City, UT)	6-2	260	Utah
47. Salua Masina	Brighton (Salt Lake City, UT)	6-4	205	Vanderbilt
48. Jack Sirmon	Brentwood Academy (Brentwood, TN	6-2	224	Washington
49. Quin Williams	Morgan County (Madison, GA)	6-2	240	Ga. Southern
50. Byron Hobbs	Eastern Hills (Fort Worth, TX)	6-4	216	Texas



Patrick Surtain Jr.

Defensive Backs

1. Patrick Surtain Jr.	American Heritage (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	6-1	199	Alabama
2. Tyson Campbell	American Heritage (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	6-3	180	Georgia
3. Caden Sterns	Steele (Cibolo, TX)	6-1	192	Texas
4. Tyreke Johnson	Trinity Christian Academy (Jacksonville, FL)	6-1	191	Ohio State
5. BJ Foster	Angleton (Angleton, TX)	6-1	188	Texas
6. Olaijah Griffin	Mission Viejo (Mission Viejo, CA)	6-0	170	USC
7. Isaac Taylor-Stuart	Helix (San Diego, CA)	6-2	187	USC
8. Jaiden Woodbey	St. John Bosco (Fontana, CA)	6-2	204	Florida State
9. Brendan Radley-Hiles	IMG Academy (Brandenton, FL)	5-10	183	Oklahoma
10. Kelvin Joseph	Scotlandville Magnet (Baton Rouge, LA)	6-2	191	LSU
11. Jalen Green	Heights (Houston, TX)	6-0	171	Texas
12. Anthony Lytton	Dr. Henry Wise (Upper Marlboro, MD)	5-10	173	Florida State
13. DeMarvion Overshown	Arp (Arp, TX)	6-4	200	Texas
14. Kyler McMichael	Greater Atlanta Christian (Norcross, GA)	6-1	201	Clemson
15. Asante Samuel Jr.	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	5-10	166	Florida State
16. Anthony Cook	Lamar (Houston, TX)	6-0	168	Texas
17. Houston Griffith	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	6-1	192	Notre Dame
18. Josh Proctor	Owasso (Owasso, OK)	6-2	190	Ohio State
19. Leon O'Neal Jr.	Cy Springs (Cypress, TX)	6-1	190	Texas A&M
20. Al Blades Jr.	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	6-0	170	Miami (Fla.)
21. Derrik Allen	Lassiter (Marietta, GA)	6-2	211	Notre Dame
22. Jalyn Armour-Davis	St. Paul's Episcopal (Mobile, AL)	6-1	180	Alabama
23. Josh Jobe	Cheshire Academy (Cheshire, CT)	6-1	180	Alabama
24. D'Shawn Jamison	Lamar (Houston, TX)	5-10	174	Texas
25. Aashari Crosswell	Long Beach Poly (Long Beach, CA)	6-1	185	Arizona State
26. Steve Stephens	Edison (Fresno, CA)	6-0	185	Oregon
27. Chase Williams	Eleanor Roosevelt (Corona, CA)	6-1	190	USC
28. Julius Irvin	Servite (Anaheim, CA)	6-1	177	Washington
29. Jevon Holland	Bishop O'Dowd (Oakland, CA)	6-1	182	Oregon
30. Myles Sims	Westlake (Atlanta, GA)	6-3	173	Michigan
31. Nadab Joseph	Miami Norland HS (Miami, FL)	6-2	180	Georgia
32. Amari Burney	Calvary Christian (Clearwater, FL)	6-1	215	Florida
33. Gurvan Hall	Palm Beach Gardens (West Palm Beach, FL)	5-11	173	Miami (Fla.)
34. Kyler Gordon	Archbishop Murphy (Everett, WA)	5-11	177	Washington
35. Kalon Gervin	Cass Technical (Detroit, MI)	5-11	180	Michigan State
36. Atanza Vongor	South Grand Prairie (Grand Prairie, TX)	6-1	200	TCU
37. Trey Dean	Dutchtown (Hampton, GA)	6-2	180	Florida
38. Kwantel Raines	Aliquippa (Aliquippa, PA)	6-3	200	West Virginia
39. Gilbert Frierson	Coral Gables Senior (Miami, FL)	6-1	185	Miami (Fla.)
40. Jaycee Horn	Alpharetta (Alpharetta, GA)	6-0	190	South Carolina
41. Sevyn Banks	Jones (Orlando, FL)	6-1	180	Ohio State
42. Jordan Moore	Yoakum (Yoakum, TX)	5-11	192	Texas A&M
43. Jairus Brents	Waggener Traditional (Louisville, KY)	5-10	178	Louisville
44. Isaiah Bolden	Wesley Chapel (Zephyrhills, FL)	6-2	175	Florida State
45. Divaad Wilson	Northwestern (Miami, FL)	6-0	180	Georgia
46. Stephan Blaylock	St. John Bosco (Bellflower, CA)	5-10	185	UCLA
47. Jamien Sherwood	Jensen Beach (Jensen Beach, FL)	6-2	195	Auburn
48. Corione Harris	Landry-Walker (New Orleans, LA)	6-0	165	Kansas
49. Christian Tutt	Thomson (Thomson, GA)	5-11	193	Auburn
50. Trenell Troutman	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	5-10	188	Louisville
51. Taiyon Palmer	Archer (Lawerenceville, GA)	6-0	178	NC State
52. Cam'ron Jones	Mansfield (Mansfield, TX)	6-0	200	Nebraska
53. Chris Smith	Hapeville Charter (Atlanta, GA)	5-11	169	Georgia
54. Chamarri Conner	Trinity Christian (Jacksonville, FL)	6-0	193	Virginia Tech
55. Jordan Miner	Wiregrass Ranch (Tampa, FL	6-1	183	Penn State
56. D.J. Ivey	South Dade (Homestead, FL)	6-1	171	Miami (Fla.)
57. Ken Montgomery Jr.	Hillsborough (Tampa, FL)	6-2	165	Maryland
58. Noah Boykin	Woodson H.D. (Washington, DC)	6-2	170	Notre Dame
59. Brendon Harris	Baylor School (Chattanooga, TN)	6-1	205	Vanderbilt
60. C.J. Smith	Oxbridge Academy (West Palm Beach, FL)	6-2	193	Nebraska
61. Dallas Craddieth	Hazelwood Central (Florissant, MO)	6-1	193	Iowa
62. Gemon Green	DeSoto (DeSoto, TX)	6-2	165	Michigan
63. Chandler Jones	Miami Central (Miami, FL)	5-10	173	Louisville
64. Jonathan Gipson	Mill Creek (Hoschton, GA)	6-2	182	South Carolina
65. Verone McKinley III	Hebron (Carrollton, TX)	5-10	170	Oregon
66. Marcus Johnson	Villa Park (Villa Park, CA)	5-10	175	Unsigned
67. John Huggins	Mainland (Daytona Beach, FL)	6-0	200	Florida
68. Trent Gordon	Manvel (Manvel, TX)	5-11	180	Penn State
69. Kendall Williamson	Brookwood (Snellville, GA)	6-1	185	Stanford
70. Myles Mason	Hewitt-Trussville (Trussville, AL)	6-2	205	Arkansas
71. Eddie Smith	Salmen (Slidell, LA)	6-0	180	Alabama
72. Julius Brents	Warren Central (Indianapolis, IN)	6-2	179	Iowa
73. Tre Douglas	Eagles Landing Christ. Acad. (McDonough, GA)	6-2	180	Vanderbilt
74. Miguel Edwards	Deerfield Beach (Deerfield Beach, FL)	6-0	164	Oklahoma
75. Michael Dowell	St. Edward (Lakewood, OH)	6-0	195	Michigan State



Joey Gatewood

Athletes

1. Joey Gatewood	Bartram Trail (Jacksonville, FL)	6-4	232	Auburn
2. Talanoa Hufanga	Crescent Valley (Corvallis, OR)	6-1	193	USC
3. Bryan Addison	Junipero Serra (Gardena, CA)	6-5	180	UCLA
4. Mario Goodrich	Lee's Summit West (Lees Summit, MO)	6-2	180	Clemson
5. L'Christian Smith	Wayne (Dayton, OH)	6-6	205	Ohio State
6. Smoke Monday	Carver (Atlanta, FL)	6-3	185	Auburn
7. Tre'Shaun Harrison	Garfield (Seattle, WA)	6-2	190	Florida State
8. Dyami Brown	West Meckenburg (Charlotte, NC)	6-2	180	UNC
9. Jaquayln Crawford	Rockdale (Rockdale, TX)	5-10	161	Oklahoma
10. Braden Lenzy	Tigard (Portland, OR)	6-0	175	Notre Dame
11. BJ Hanspard	DeSoto (DeSoto, TX)	6-0	170	Baylor
12. Bryce Thompson	Dutch Fork (Irmo, SC)	6-0	180	South Carolina
13. Richard Jibunor	Athens Christian (Athens, GA)	6-3	206	Auburn
14. Xavier Henderson	Pickerington Central (Pickerington, OH)	6-0	189	Michigan State
15. Jaylon King	Ensworth (Nashville, TN)	6-1	180	Georgia Tech
16. Iverson Clement	Rancocas Valley (Mount Holly, NJ)	5-11	199	Florida
17. James Graham	Fitzgerald (Fitzgerald, GA)	6-1	180	Georgia Tech
18. De'Von Graves	Appomattox County (Appomattox, VA)	6-1	180	NC State
19. Marquez Ezzard	Stockbridge (Stockbridge, GA)	6-2	213	Miami (Fla.)
20. Atrilleon Williams	Archbishop Stepinac (Yonkers, NY)	6-2	190	Syracuse
21. Vernon Jackson	Boling (Boling, TX)	6-3	240	Texas A&M
22. Khalil Shakir	Vista Murrieta (Murrieta, CA)	6-1	175	Boise State
23. Marcus Riley	James Rickards (Tallahassee, FL)	5-10	165	Louisville
24. Kundurrius Taylor	Ridgeway (Memphis, TN)	6-3	200	Oklahoma
25. Marcus Murphy	West Point (West Point, MS)	6-1	190	Miss. State

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ACC

1.	Trevor Lawrence	Cartersville (Cartersville, GA)	QB	6-6	208	Clemson
2.	Xavier Thomas	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	DE	6-3	260	Clemson
3.	KJ Henry	West Forsyth (Clemmons, NC)	DE	6-6	235	Clemson
4.	Jackson Carman	Fairfield (Fairfield, OH)	OT	6-6	330	Clemson
5.	Lorenzo Lingard	University (Orange City, FL)	RB	6-0	190	Miami (Fla.)
6.	Derion Kendrick	South Pointe (Rock Hill, SC)	WR	6-1	184	Clemson
7.	Brevin Jordan	Bishop Gorman (Las Vegas, NV)	TE	6-3	250	Miami (Fla.)
8.	Jaiden Woodbey	St. John Bosco (Fontana, CA)	S	6-2	204	Florida State
9.	Justyn Ross	Central (Phenix City, AL)	WR	6-4	201	Clemson
10.	Anthony Lytton	Dr. Henry Wise (Upper Marlboro, MD)	CB	5-10	173	Florida State
11.	William Barnes	Apopka (Apopka, FL)	OT	6-4	325	UNC
12.	Nesta Silvera	American Heritage (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	DT	6-2	308	Miami (Fla.)
13.	Kyler McMichael	Greater Atlanta Christian (Norcross, GA)	CB	6-1	201	Clemson
14.	Jordyn Adams	Green Hope (Cary,NC)	WR	6-2	175	UNC
15.	Asante Samuel Jr.	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	CB	5-10	166	Florida State
16.	Mark Pope	Miami Southridge (Hialeah, FL)	WR	6-1	175	Miami (Fla.)
17.	Jarren Williams	Central Gwinnett (Lawrenceville, GA)	QB	6-2	206	Miami (Fla.)
18.	Payton Wilson	Orange (Hillsborough, NC)	LB	6-4	225	NC State
19.	Al Blades Jr.	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	CB	6-0	170	Miami (Fla.)
20.	Josh Belk	Lewisville (Richburg, SC)	DT	6-3	309	Clemson
21.	Ricky Person	Heritage (Wake Forest, NC)	RB	6-2	202	NC State
22.	Mario Goodrich	Lee's Summit West (Lees Summit, MO)	ATH	6-2	180	Clemson
23.	Robert Cooper	South Gwinnett (Snellville, GA)	DT	6-2	377	Florida State
24.	Justin Mascoll	South Gwinnett (Snellville, GA)	DE	6-4	237	Clemson
25.	Delone Scaife	Miami Southridge (Miami, FL)	OG	6-3	320	Miami (Fla.)
26.	Dax Hollifield	Shelby (Shelby, NC)	LB	6-2	236	Virginia Tech
27.	Brian Hightower	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	WR	6-3	202	Miami (Fla.)
28.	Warren Thompson	Armwood (Seffner, FL)	WR	6-3	200	Florida State
29.	Tre'Shaun Harrison	Garfield (Seattle, WA)	ATH	6-2	190	Florida State
30.	Camron Davis	Miami Carol City (Opa Locka, FL)	RB	5-10	190	Miami (Fla.)
31.	Xavier Peters	Lakota West (West Chester, OH)	LB	6-4	225	Florida State
32.	Tre Turner	Northwest Guilford (Greensboro, NC)	WR	6-4	185	Virginia Tech
33.	Dyami Brown	West Meckenburg (Charlotte, NC)	ATH	6-2	180	UNC
34.	Gurvan Hall	Palm Beach Gardens (West Palm Beach, FL)	S	5-11	173	Miami (Fla.)
35.	Alim McNeill	Sanderson (Raleigh, NC)	DT	6-2	272	NC State
36.	Gilbert Frierson	Coral Gables Senior (Miami, FL)	CB	6-1	185	Miami (Fla.)
37.	Mike Jones Jr.	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	LB	6-0	228	Clemson
38.	Will Mallory	Providence (Jacksonville, FL)	TE	6-5	207	Miami (Fla.)
39.	Mychale Salahuddin	Woodson H.D. (Washington, DC)	RB	5-10	193	Pittsburgh
40.	Malcolm Lamar	Armwood (Seffner, FL)	DE	6-5	250	Florida State

Big 12

1.	Caden Sterns	Steele (Cibolo, TX)	S	6-1	192	Texas
2.	BJ Foster	Angleton (Angleton, TX)	S	6-1	188	Texas
3.	Brey Walker	Westmoore (Moore, OK)	OT	6-7	320	Oklahoma
4.	Brendan Radley-Hiles	IMG Academy (Brandenton, FL)	CB	5-10	183	Oklahoma
5.	Justin Rogers	Parkway (Bossier City, LA)	QB	6-4	210	TCU
6.	Jalen Green	Heights (Houston, TX)	CB	6-0	171	Texas
7.	DeMarvion Overshown	Arp (Arp, TX)	S	6-4	200	Texas
8.	Brennan Eagles	Alief Taylor (Houston, TX)	WR	6-4	214	Texas
9.	Anthony Cook	Lamar (Houston, TX)	CB	6-0	168	Texas
10.	Ronnie Perkins	Lutheran North (St. Louis, MO)	DE	6-2.5	256	Oklahoma
11.	Michael Thompson	Parkway North (St. Louis, MO)	DT	6.4	291	Oklahoma
12.	Joshua Moore	Yoakum (Yoakum, TX)	WR	6-1	170	Texas
13.	T.J. Pledger	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	RB	5-8	190	Oklahoma
14.	Ron Tatum	Putnam City (Oklahoma City, OK)	DE	6.5	269	Oklahoma
15.	Al'Vonte Woodard	Lamar (Houston, TX)	WR	6-1	193	Texas
16.	D'Shawn Jamison	Lamar (Houston, TX)	CB	5-10	174	Texas
17.	Ayodele Adeoye	IMG Academy (St. Louis, MO)	LB	6-0	231	Texas
18.	Keondre Coburn	Westfield (Houston, TX)	DT	6-1	329	Texas
19.	Dante Stills	Fairmont (Fairmont, WV)	DE	6-4	265	West Virginia
20.	Junior Angilau	East (Salt Lake City, UT)	OT	6-6	297	Texas
21.	Jalen Redmond	Midwest City (Oklahoma City, OK)	DE	6-4	233	Oklahoma
22.	CJ Moore	Union (Tulsa, OK)	WR	6-5	175	Okla. State
23.	Keaontay Ingram	Carthage (Carthage, TX)	RB	6-1	190	Texas
24.	Spencer Sanders	Ryan (Denton, TX)	QB	6-2	190	Okla. State
25.	Jaquayln Crawford	Rockdale (Rockdale, TX)	ATH	5-10	161	Oklahoma
26.	Joseph Ossai	Oak Ridge (Conroe, TX)	DE	6-4	220	Texas
27.	Atanza Vongor	South Grand Prairie (Grand Prairie, TX)	S	6-1	200	TCU
28.	Kwantel Raines	Aliquippa (Aliquippa, PA)	S	6-3	200	West Virginia
29.	DaShaun White	Richland (North Richland Hills, TX)	LB	6-1	222	Oklahoma
30.	Nik Bonitto	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	LB	6-3	204	Oklahoma
31.	Malcolm Epps	Dekaney (Houston, TX)	TE	6-6	218	Texas
32.	BJ Hanspard	DeSoto (DeSoto, TX)	ATH	6-0	170	Baylor
33.	Cameron Rising	Newbury Park (Newbury, CA)	QB	6-2	209	Texas
34.	Tanner Mordecai	Midway (Waco, TX)	QB	6-3	213	Oklahoma
35.	Darrell Simpson	Northwest (Justin, TX)	OT	6-7	336	Oklahoma
36.	Joseph Scates	Dunbar (Dayton, OH)	WR	6-3	180	Iowa State
37.	Tevailance Hunt	Texas High (Texarkana, TX)	WR	6-2	185	TCU
38.	Anthony Williams	Hahnville (Boutte, LA)	RB	5-9	175	Kansas
39.	Corione Harris	Landry-Walker (New Orleans, LA)	CB	6-0	165	Kansas
40.	Casey Thompson	Newcastle (Newcastle, OK)	QB	6-1	184	Texas

Big Ten

1.	Micah Parsons	Harrisburg (Harrisburg, PA)	DE	6-3	235	Penn State
2.	Nicholas Petit-Frere	Berkeley Prep (Tampa, FL)	OT	6-6	272	Ohio State
3.	Justin Shorter	South Brunswick (Momnouth Junction, NJ)	WR	6-4	213	Penn State
4.	Taron Vincent	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	DT	6-2	285	Ohio State
5.	Tyreke Johnson	Trinity Christian Academy (Jacksonville, FL)	S	6-1	191	Ohio State
6.	Ricky Slade	C.D. Hylton (Woodbridge, VA)	RB	5-9	185	Penn State
7.	Jaelen Gill	Westerville South (Westerville, OH)	RB	6-1	182	Ohio State
8.	Tyreke Smith	Cleveland Heights (Cleveland, OH)	DE	6-3	204	Ohio State
9.	Jeremy Ruckert	Lindenhurst (Lindenhurst, NY)	TE	6-6	238	Ohio State
10.	Teradja Mitchell	Bishop Sullivan Catholic (Virginia Beach, VA)	LB	6-2	232	Ohio State
11.	Tommy Togiai	Highland (Pocatello, ID)	DT	6-3	290	Ohio State
12.	Rasheed Walker	North Point (Waldorf, MD)	OT	6-6	290	Penn State
13.	Matthew Jones	Erasmus Hall (Brooklyn, NY)	OC	6-4	300	Ohio State
14.	Josh Proctor	Owasso (Owasso, OK)	S	6-2	190	Ohio State
15.	Kamryn Babb	Christian Brothers (St. Louis, MO)	WR	6-1	189	Ohio State
16.	Jayson Oweh	Blair Academy (Blairstown, NJ)	DE	6-5	236	Penn State
17.	PJ Mustipher	McDonogh School (Owings Mills, MD)	DT	6.5	290	Penn State
18.	Brian Snead	Armwood (Seffner, FL)	RB	5-11	200	Ohio State
19.	Tyler Friday	Don Bosco Prep (Ramsey, NJ)	DT	6-3	263	Ohio State
20.	Aidan Hutchinson	Divine Child (Dearborn, MI)	DE	6-6	260	Michigan
21.	Nana Asiedu	North Stafford (Stafford, VA)	OT	6-5	265	Penn State
22.	Cameron McGrone	Lawrence Central (Indianapolis, IN)	LB	6-1	215	Michigan
23.	Max Wray	Franklin (Franklin, TN)	OT	6-7	289	Ohio State
24.	L'Christian Smith	Wayne (Dayton, OH)	ATH	6-6	205	Ohio State
25.	Adrian Martinez	Clovis West (Fresno, CA)	QB	6-2	205	Nebraska
26.	Jaelyn Duncan	St. Frances Academy (Owings, MD)	OT	6-6	300	Maryland
27.	Zack Kuntz	Camp Hill (Camp Hill, PA)	TE	6-7	221	Penn State
28.	Austin Fontaine	DeMatha Catholic (Hyattsville, MD)	DT	6-3	309	Maryland
29.	Dallas Gant	St. John's Jesuit (Toledo, OH)	LB	6-3	225	Ohio State
30.	Mustapha Muhammad	Ridge Point (Missouri City, TX)	TE	6-4	235	Michigan
31.	Myles Sims	Westlake (Atlanta, GA)	CB	6-3	173	Michigan
32.	Kalon Gervin	Cass Technical (Detroit, MI)	CB	5-11	180	Michigan State
33.	Jahan Dotson	Nazareth (Nazareth, PA)	WR	5-11	165	Penn State
34.	Cameron Jurgens	Beatrice (Beatrice, NE)	TE	6-3	240	Nebraska
35.	Joe Milton	Olympia (Orlando, FL)	QB	6-6	230	Michigan
36.	Maurice Washington	Trinity Christian School (Cedar Hill, TX)	RB	6-1	190	Nebraska
37.	Calvin Avery	Bishop Dunne (Dallas, TX)	DT	6-2	310	Illinois
38.	K'Vaughan Pope	Dinwiddle County (Dinwiddle, VA)	LB	6-2	210	Ohio State
39.	Curtis Dunlap	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	OG	6-4	368	Minnesota
40.	Javontae Jean-Baptiste	Bergen Catholic (Oradell, NJ)	LB	6-5	215	Ohio State

Pac-12

1.	Amon-Ra St. Brown	Mater Del (Anaheim, CA)	WR	6-0	191	USC
2.	Palaie Gaoteote	Bishop Gorman (Las Vegas, NV)	LB	6-2	235	USC
3.	JT Daniels	Mater Dei (Santa Ana, CA)	QB	6-2	205	USC
4.	Olaijah Griffin	Mission Viejo (Mission Viejo, CA)	CB	6-0	170	USC
5.	Isaac Taylor-Stuart	Helix (San Diego, CA)	CB	6-2	187	USC
6.	Dorian Thompson-Robinson	Bishop Gorman (Las Vegas, NV)	QB	6-2	195	UCLA
7.	Devon Williams	Antelope Valley (Lancaster, CA)	WR	6-4	200	USC
8.	Tanner McKee	Centennial (Corona, CA)	QB	6-6	220	Stanford
9.	Penei Sewell	Desert Hills (Saint George, Utah)	OG	6-5	349	Oregon
10.	Marquis Spiker	Murrieta Valley (Murrieta, CA)	WR	6-3	180	Washington
11.	Solomon Tuliaupupu	Mater Dei (Santa Ana, CA)	LB	6-2	220	USC
12.	Talanoa Hufanga	Crescent Valley (Corvallis, OR)	ATH	6-1	193	USC
13.	Colson Yankoff	Coeur d'Alene (Coeur d'Alene, ID)	QB	6-4	204	Washington
14.	Jacob Sirmon	Bothell (Bothell, WA)	QB	6-4	227	Washington
15.	Bryan Addison	Junipero Serra (Gardena, CA)	ATH	6-5	180	UCLA
16.	Tuli Letuligasenoa	De La Salle (Concord, CA)	DT	6-1	338	Washington
17.	Justin Dedich	Chaparral (Temecula, CA)	OC	6-2	290	USC
18.	Jalen Hall	Long Beach Poly (Long Beach, CA)	WR	6-4	192	Oregon
19.	Merlin Robertson	Junipero Serra (Gardena, CA)	LB	6-3	241	Arizona State
20.	Brandon Kaho	Reno (Reno, NV)	LB	6-1	218	Washington
21.	Aashari Crosswell	Long Beach Poly (Long Beach, CA)	S	6-1	185	Arizona State
22.	Steve Stephens	Edison (Fresno, CA)	S	6-0	185	Oregon
23.	Chase Williams	Eleanor Roosevelt (Corona, CA)	CB	6-1	190	USC
24.	Tyler Shough	Hamilton (Chandler, AZ)	QB	6.5	187	Oregon
25.	Raymond Scott	Narbonne (Harbor City, CA)	LB	6-2	220	USC
26.	Julius Irvin	Servite (Anaheim, CA)	S	6-1	177	Washington
27.	Chase Cota	South Medford (Medford, OR)	WR	6.4	195	UCLA
28.	Jevon Holland	Bishop O'Dowd (Oakland, CA)	S	6-1	182	Oregon
29.	Jack Tuttle	Mission Hills (San Marcos, CA)	QB	6-4	195	Utah
30.	Adrian Jackson	Mullen (Denver, CO)	LB	6-2	210	Oregon
31.	Isaah Crocker	Inderkum (Sacramento, CA)	WR	6-1	175	Oregon
32.	Kyler Gordon	Archbishop Murphy (Everett, WA)	CB	5-11	177	Washington
33.	Sam Taimani	East (Salt Lake City, UT)	OG	6-2	320	Washington
34.	Austin Osborne	Mission Viejo (Mission Viejo, CA)	WR	6-2	188	Washington
35.	Abdul-Malik McClain	J Serra Catholic (San Juan Capistrano, CA)	DE	6-4	230	USC
36.	Solomon Enis	North Canyon (Phoenix, AZ)	WR	6-4	190	Utah
37.	Chris Murray	Mater Dei (Santa Ana, CA)	OG	6-3	300	UCLA
38.	Jack West	Saraland (Saraland, AL)	QB	6-4	217	Stanford
39.	Trevor Trout	Chaminade (St. Louis, MO)	DT	6-3	315	USC
40.	Michael Wilson	Chaminade (Simi Valley, CA)	WR	6-2	190	Stanford

SEC

1.	Justin Fields	Harrison (Kennesaw, GA)	QB	6-3	221	Georgia
2.	Eyabi Anoma	St. Frances Academy (Baltimore, MD)	DE	6-5	235	Alabama
3.	Patrick Surtain Jr.	American Heritage (For Lauderdale, FL)	CB	6-1	199	Alabama
4.	Zamir White	Scotland County (Laurinburg, NC)	RB	6-1	220	Georgia
5.	Jamaree Salyer	Pace Academy (Atlanta, GA)	OG	6-4	342	Georgia
6.	Tyson Campbell	American Heritage (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	CB	6-3	180	Georgia
7.	Terrace Marshall	Parkway (Bossier City, LA)	WR	6-3	192	LSU
8.	Adam Anderson	Rome (Rome, GA)	LB	6-4	214	Georgia
9.	Cade Mays	Knoxville Catholic (Knoxville, TN)	OT	6-6	318	Georgia
10.	Brenton Cox	Stockbridge (Stockbridge, GA)	DE	6-5	247	Georgia
11.	Quay Walker	Crisp County (Cordele, GA)	LB	6-4	236	Georgia
12.	Jaylen Waddle	Episcopal (Bellaire, TX)	WR	5-10	175	Alabama
13.	James Cook	Northwestern (Miami, FL)	RB	6-0	181	Georgia
14.	Kelvin Joseph	Scotlandville Magnet (Baton Rouge, LA)	S	6-2	191	LSU
15.	JJ Peterson	Colquitt County (Moultrie, GA)	LB	6-3	231	Tennessee
16.	Joey Gatewood	Bartram Trail (Jacksonville, FL)	ATH	6-4	232	Auburn
17.	Luke Ford	Carterville (Carterville, IL)	TE	6-6	248	Georgia
18.	Trey Hill	Houston County (Warner Robins, GA)	OG	6-4	346	Georgia
19.	Matt Corral	Long Beach Poly (Long Beach, CA)	QB	6-2	202	Ole Miss
20.	Jacob Copeland	Escambia (Pensacola, FL)	WR	6-0	192	Florida
21.	Stephon Wynn	IMG Academy (Anderson, SC)	DE	6-4	308	Alabama
22.	Leon O'Neal Jr.	Cy Springs (Cypress, TX)	S	6-1	190	Texas A&M
23.	Richard Gouraige	Cambridge Christian School (Tampa, FL)	OT	6-5	271	Florida
24.	Ja'Marr Chase	Archbishop Rummel (Metairie, LA)	WR	6-1	195	LSU
25.	Emory Jones	Heard County (Franklin, GA)	QB	6-3	195	Florida
26.	Otis Reese	Lee County (Leesburg, GA)	LB	6-4	206	Georgia
27.	Justin Watkins	East Ridge (Clermont, FL)	WR	5-11	172	Florida
28.	Matthew Hill	Brookwood (Snellville, GA)	WR	6-2	185	Auburn
29.	Jalen Preston	Manvel (Manvel, TX)	WR	6-2	212	Texas A&M
30.	Channing Tindall	Spring Valley (Columbia, SC)	LB	6-2	213	Georgia
31.	Jalyn Armour-Davis	St. Paul's Episcopal (Mobile, AL)	CB	6-1	180	Alabama
32.	Jordan Davis	Southwind (Memphis, TN)	DE	6-5	238	Alabama
33.	Josh Jobe	Cheshire Academy (Cheshire, CT)	CB	6-1	180	Alabama
34.	Emil Ekiyor	Cathedral (Indianapolis, IN)	OC	6-2	322	Alabama
35.	Coynis Miller	Jackson-Olin (Birmingham, Alabama)	DT	6-2	300	Auburn
36.	Alontae Taylor	Coffee County Central (Manchester, TN)	WR	6-0	184	Tennessee
37.	Kearis Jackson	Peach County (Fort Valley, GA)	WR	6-0	203	Georgia
38.	Cameron Latu	Olympus (Salt Lake City, UT)	DE	6-5	236	Alabama
39.	Tommy Brown	Mater Dei (Santa Ana, CA)	OG	6-7	313	Alabama
40.	Greg Emerson	North Side (Jackson, TN)	DT	6-3	280	Tennessee

AAC

1.	Leonard Taylor	Springfield (Springfield, OH)	TE	6-6	246	Cincinnati
2.	Tavion Thomas	Dunbar (Dayton, OH)	RB	6-2	225	Cincinnati
3.	Josh Whyle	LaSalle (Cincinnati, OH)	TE	6-6	215	Cincinnati
4.	Ke'Von Ahmad	Colleyville Heritage (Colleyville, TX)	WR	6-1	183	UCF
5.	Malik Vann	Fairfield (Fairfield, OH)	DE	6-3	270	Cincinnati
6.	Meechi Harris	Xenia (Xenia, OH)	WR	6-2	188	Cincinnati
7.	Eriq Gilyard	Trinity Christian Academy (Jacksonville, FL)	OLB	5-11	225	UCF
8.	Treveon Johnson	Brenham (Brenham, TX)	WR	6-1	179	SMU
9.	Holton Ahlers	DH Conley (Greenville, NC)	QB	6-4	235	East Carolina
10.	Jeffery Johnson	Brookhaven (Brookhaven, MS)	DT	6-3	312	Tulane

C-USA

1.	Maureese Wren	Horn (Mesquite, TX)	ATH	6-4	216	Louisiana Tech
2.	Deuntra Hyman	Meridian (Meridian, MS)	DE	6-3	230	Southern Miss
3.	Jaquaun Webb	Oxford (Oxford, MS)	WR	6-1	180	Marshall
4.	Arak McDuffie	Trinity (Louisville, KY)	DE	6-5	241	Marshall
5.	Kevaris Thomas	Lakeland (Lakeland, FL)	QB	6-3	230	WKU
6.	Isaiah Windmon	John Ehret (Marrero, LA)	S	6-2	190	Louisiana Tech
7.	CD Daniels	Homewood (Birmingham, AL)	CB	6-2	180	UA
8.	Jarek Campbell	Riverdale (Murfreesboro, TN)	ATH	5-11	195	MTSU
9.	Jamal Anderson	South Dade (Homestead, FL)	S	6-2	180	FIU
10.	Donovan Georges	Champagnat Chatholic (Hialeah, FL)	LB	6-0	237	FIU

MAC

1.	Antwan Reed	Muskegon (Muskegon, MI)	OT	6-6	326	WMU
2.	Jalynn Williams	St. Petersburg (Saint Petersburg, FL)	WR	5-10	188	Toledo
3.	Carter Bradley	Providence (Jacksonville, FL)	QB	6-3	208	Toledo
4.	Kaleb Eleby	Pattonville Sr. (Maryland Heights, MO)	QB	6-2	205	WMU
5.	Derrius Mullins	St. Francis De Sales (Columbus, OH)	DT	6-4	324	Toledo
6.	Jalin Cooper	Medina (Medina, NY)	WR	6-4	180	Toledo
7.	Charles Robinson	Waubonsie Valley (Aurora, IL)	TE	6-3	210	NIU
8.	Lavel Dumont	Wharton (Tampa, FL)	OT	6-4	270	Toledo
9.	Cameron Stage	Cardinal Gibbons (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	OG	6-4	295	Bowling Green
10.	Keonta Nixon	Lake Park (Roselle, IL)	WR	6-4	205	CMU

MW

1.	Tyrone Sampson Jr.	East English Village Prep (Detroit, MI)	C	6-3	295	Fresno State
2.	Khalil Shakir	Vista Murrieta (Murrieta, CA)	ATH	6-1	175	Boise State
3.	Nikko Hall	Calabasas (Calabasas, CA)	S	6-1	171	Colorado State
4.	Tyneil Hopper	Roswell (Roswell, GA)	TE	6-3	225	Boise State
5.	J.R. Justice	St. Augustine (San Diego, CA)	ATH	6-3	200	San Diego State
6.	Chris Mitchell	Mission Viejo (Mission Viejo, CA)	S	6-0	190	Boise State
7.	Stefan Cobbs	Fossil Ridge (Keller, TX)	WR	6-0	170	Boise State
8.	Kobe Smith	Junipero Serra (Gardena, CA)	WR	6-2	174	San Diego State
9.	Nic McTear	Heritage (Frisco, TX)	TE	6-4	220	San Diego State
10.	Josiah Bradley	Saguaro (Scottsdale, AZ)	S	6-1	190	Nevada

Sun Belt

1.	Quin Williams	Morgan County (Madison, GA)	OLB	6-2	240	Georgia So.
2.	Nathan Page	Joe T. Robinson (Little Rock, AR)	ATH	6-0	175	Arkansas State
3.	Timaje Porter	Theodore (Theodore, AL)	DT	6-2	344	Louisiana
4.	Brandon Cross	Jones (Orlando, FL)	CB	5-10	182	Georgia So.
5.	Justin Birdsong	Stephenson (Stone Mountain, GA)	CB	5-11	175	Georgia So.
6.	Demontrez Brown	Bob Jones (Madison, AL)	WR	6-3	200	Troy
7.	Jake Andrews	Stanhope Elmore (Millbrook, AL)	OT	6-3	286	Troy
8.	K.J. Robertson	Thompson (Alabaster, AL)	OLB	6-2	205	Troy
9.	Destin Coates	James Rickards (Tallahassee, FL)	RB	5-10	190	Georgia State
10.	Jax Gasaway	Star City (Star City, AR)	OT	6-7	265	Arkansas State

Top 50 Classes

1. Georgia
2. Ohio State
3. Texas
4. USC
5. Penn State
6. Clemson
7. Alabama
8. Miami
9. Oklahoma
10. Notre Dame
11. Florida State
12. Auburn
13. Washington
14. Florida
15. LSU
16. Oregon
17. Texas A&M
18. UCLA
19. South Carolina
20. Tennessee
21. Michigan
22. Nebraska
23. North Carolina
24. Virginia Tech
25. TCU
26. NC State
27. Mississippi State
28. Maryland
29. Louisville
30. Baylor
31. Ole Miss
32. Michigan State
33. Oklahoma State
34. Utah
35. West Virginia
36. Arizona State
37. Minnesota
38. Kentucky
39. Stanford
40. Vanderbilt
41. Iowa
42. Missouri
43. California
44. Wisconsin
45. Washington State
46. Pittsburgh
47. Cincinnati
48. Indiana
49. Arkansas
50. Purdue



Justin Fields, Georgia

AP

Team Rankings

AAC
1. Cincinnati
2. USF
3. Tulane
4. UCF
5. Houston
6. Temple
7. SMU
8. Memphis
9. East Carolina
10. Tulsa
11. Navy
12. Connecticut

Big Ten
1. Ohio State
2. Penn State
3. Michigan
4. Nebraska
5. Maryland
6. Michigan State
7. Minnesota
8. Iowa
9. Wisconsin
10. Indiana
11. Purdue
12. Illinois
13. Rutgers
14. Northwestern

Pac-12
1. USC
2. Washington
3. Oregon
4. UCLA
5. Utah
6. Arizona State
7. Stanford
8. California
9. Washington State
10. Colorado
11. Arizona
12. Oregon State

ACC
1. Clemson
2. Miami
3. Florida State
4. North Carolina
5. Virginia Tech
6. NC State
7. Louisville
8. Pittsburgh
9. Syracuse
10. Georgia Tech
11. Wake Forest
12. Duke
13. Virginia
14. Boston College

Conference USA
1. FIU
2. Marshall
3. Louisiana tech
4. FAU
5. WKU
6. Southern Miss
7. UTSA
8. North Texas
9. Middle Tennessee
10. UAB
11. Charlotte
12. Rice
13. ODU
14. UTEP

SEC
1. Georgia
2. Alabama
3. Auburn
4. Florida
5. LSU
6. Texas A&M
7. South Carolina
8. Tennessee
9. Mississippi State
10. Ole Miss
11. Kentucky
12. Vanderbilt
13. Missouri
14. Arkansas

Big 12
1. Texas
2. Oklahoma
3. TCU
4. Baylor
5. Oklahoma State
6. West Virginia
7. Iowa State
8. Kansas
9. Kansas State
10. Texas Tech

MAC
1. Toledo
2. Western Michigan
3. Bowling Green
4. Northern Illinois
5. Kent State
6. Eastern Michigan
7. Ball State
8. Akron
9. Central Michigan
10. Ohio
11. Miami
12. Buffalo

Sun Belt
1. Georgia Southern
2. Arkansas State
3. Georgia State
4. Troy
5. Texas State
6. South Alabama
7. Appalachian State
8. Coastal Carolina
9. ULM
10. Louisiana

Mountain West
1. Boise State
2. San Diego State
3. Nevada
4. Colorado State
5. Fresno State
6. Hawaii
7. San Jose State
8. UNLV
9. Utah State
10. Air Force
11. Wyoming
12. New Mexico



1.	Kayvon Thibodeaux	Oaks Christian (Thousand Oaks, CA)	DE	6-5	235
2.	Jadon Haselwood	Cedar Grove (Ellenwood, GA)	WR	6-3	187
3.	Zach Harrison	Olentangy Orange (Lewis Center, OH)	DE	6-6	240
4.	Ishmael Sopsher	Amite (Amite, LA)	DT	6-5	279
5.	Nolan Smith	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	DE	6-3	232
6.	Trey Sanders	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	RB	5-12	216
7.	Owen Pappoe	Grayson (Loganville, GA)	LB	6-0	211
8.	Bru McCoy	Nater Dei (Santa Ana, CA)	ATH	6-3	215
9.	Devontae Dobbs	Belleville (Belleville, MI)	OT	6-4	270
10.	Dominick Blaylock	Walton (Marietta, GA)	WR	6-0	175
11.	Clay Webb	Oxford (Oxford, AL)	C	6-3	297
12.	Kenyon Green	Atascocita (Humble, TX)	OT	6-4	317
13.	Brian Williams	Bishop Dunne (Dallas, TX)	S	6-0	185
14.	Chris Hinton	Greater Atlanta Christian (Norcross, GA)	DE	6-4	265
15.	Frank Ladson	South Dade (Miami, FL)	WR	6-4	170
16.	Akeem Dent	Palm Beach Central (West Palm Beach, FL)	CB	5-11	176
17.	Henry To'oto'o	De La Salle (Concord, CA)	LB	6-2	210
18.	Quavaris Crouch	Harding University (Charlotte, NC)	RB	6-2	224
19.	Derek Stingley	Dunham School (Baton Rouge, LA)	CB	6-0	170
20.	Darnell Wright	Huntington (Huntington, WV)	OT	6-6	290
21.	Zacch Pickens	TL Hanna (Anderson, SC)	DE	6-5	273
22.	Kardell Thomas	Southern University Lab (Baton Rouge, LA)	OG	6-4	320
23.	Faatui Tuitele	St. Louis (Honolulu, HI)	DT	6-4	299
24.	Nakobe Dean	Horn Lake (Horn Lake, MS)	LB	6-0	215
25.	Pierce Quick	Hewitt-Trussville (Trussville, AL)	OT	6-5	285
26.	Jordan Whittington	Cuero (Cuero, TX)	WR	6-1	198
27.	Daxton Hill	Booker T. Washington (Tulsa, OK)	S	6-1	190
28.	Isaiah Williams	Trinity Catholic (St. Louis, MO)	ATH	5-10	160
29.	Chris Steele	St. John Bosco (Bellflower, CA)	CB	6-1	188
30.	Theo Wease	Allen (Allen, TX)	WR	6-3	194
31.	Noah Cain	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	RB	5-11	209
32.	Travon Walker	Upson-Lee (Thomaston, GA)	DT	6-4	255
33.	Spencer Rattler	Pinnacle (Phoenix, AZ)	QB	6-2	180
34.	Tyler Johnson	Oak Ridge (Conroe, TX)	OT	6-5	308
35.	Brandon Smith	Louisa County (Mineral, VA)	DE	6-5	215
36.	Savion Jackson	Clayton (Clayton, NC)	DE	6-2	245
37.	Lewis Cine	Trinity Christian School (Cedar Hill, TX)	S	6-2	180
38.	Evan Neal	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	OG	6-8	391
39.	Deyavie Hammond	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	OG	6-4	320
40.	Wanya Morris	Grayson (Loganville, GA)	OT	6-5	268
41.	Mary-Antony Richards	Wellington (West Palm Beach, FL)	ATH	6-1	194
42.	De'Gabriel Floyd	Westlake (Westlake Village, CA)	LB	6-2	220
43.	Hudson Henry	Pulaski Academy (Little Rock, AR)	TE	6-5	225
44.	Logan Brown	East Kentwood (Grand Rapids, MI)	OT	6-6	285
45.	MyKael Wright	Valencia (Valencia, CA)	CB	5-11	180
46.	Andrew Booth	Archer (Lawrenceville, GA)	CB	6-0	183
47.	Treylon Burks	Warren (Warren, AR)	WR	6-3	180
48.	Devonta Lee	Amite (Amite, LA)	WR	6-2	212
49.	Josh Sanguinetti	University School (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	ATH	6-2	165
50.	Arjei Henderson	Fort Bend Travis (Richmond, TX)	WR	6-1	179
51.	Nathan Pickering	Seminary (Seminary, MS)	DE	6-5	270
52.	Mycah Pittman	Calabasas (Calabasas, CA)	WR	6-0	195
53.	Grant Gunnell	St. Pius X (Houston, TX)	QB	6-6	212
54.	Marquez Beason	Bishop Dunne (Dallas, TX)	ATH	5-11	173
55.	Jonah Tauanu'u	Narbonne (Harbor City, CA)	OT	6-6	310
56.	Quinn Carroll	Edina Senior (Minneapolis, MN)	OT	6-6	290
57.	Doug Nester	Spring Valley (Huntington, WV)	OT	6-6	295
58.	Antonio Alfano	Rahway (Rahway, NJ)	DE	6-4	255
59.	Shane Lee	St. Frances Academy (Baltimore, MD)	LB	6-1	240
60.	Austin Jones	Bishop O'Dowd (Oakland, CA)	RB	5-11	190
61.	Marcus Washington	Trinity Catholic (St. Louis, MO)	WR	6-2	170
62.	DeMarcco Hellams	DeMatha Catholic (Hyattsville, MD)	WR	6-2	215
63.	Harry Miller	Buford (Buford, GA)	OT	6-4	310
64.	Kyle Ford	Orange Lutheran (Orange, CA)	WR	6-2	200
65.	Sean Rhyan	San Juan Hills (San Juan Capistrano, CA)	OT	6-5	302
66.	Diwun Black	Forest (Forest, MS)	ATH	6-3	205
67.	Stephen Herron Jr.	Trinity (Louisville, KY)	DE	6-4	235
68.	Jeremiah Criddell	Mater Dei (Santa Ana, CA)	CB	6-1	185
69.	Jerrion Ealy	Jackson Prep (Flowood, MS)	RB	5-9	190
70.	Devyn Ford	North Stafford (Stafford, VA)	RB	6-0	185
71.	Julian Barnett	Belleville (Belleville, MI)	CB	6-1	186
72.	John Emery Jr.	Destrehan (Destrehan, LA)	RB	6-0	194
73.	Bo Nix	Pinson Valley (Pinson, AL)	QB	6-2	194
74.	David Bell	Warren Central (Indianapolis, IN)	WR	6-2	185
75.	Jaylen McCollough	Hillgrove (Powder Springs, GA)	S	6-1	190
76.	Jowon Briggs	Walnut Hills (Cincinnati, OH)	DT	6-2	275
77.	Khris Bogle	Cardinal Gibbons (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	DE	6-4	207
78.	Garrett Wilson	Lake Travis (Austin, TX)	WR	6-0	185
79.	King Mwikuta	Troup County (Language, GA)	LB	6-4	232
80.	Trezmen Marshall	Clinch County (Homerville, GA)	ATH	6-1	236
81.	Jaquaze Sorrells	Largo (Largo, FL)	DT	6-3	270
82.	Lance Wilhoite	Franklin Road Academy (Nashville, TN)	WR	6-3	180
83.	Mase Funa	Mater Dei (Santa Ana, CA)	LB	6-3	240
84.	Dylan Morris	Graham-Kapowsin (Graham, WA)	QB	6-1	200
85.	Charles Moore	Louisville (Louisville, MS)	DE	6-4	268
86.	Trey Palmer	Kentwood (Kentwood, LA)	WR	6-1	170
87.	Jeremiah Payton	Duncan U. Fletcher (Neptune Beach, FL)	WR	6-1	186
88.	Christian Williams	Daphne (Daphne, AL)	CB	6-1	177
89.	Tyrique Stevenson	South Dade (Homestead, FL)	ATH	6-0	190
90.	Jalen Curry	St. Pius X (Houston, TX)	WR	6-3	195
91.	Maninoa Tufano	Punahou (Honolulu, HI)	LB	6-3	220
92.	Nolan Rumler	Archbishop Hoban (Akron, OH)	OG	6-4	290
93.	Jayden Daniels	Cajon (San Bernardino, CA)	QB	6-3	170
94.	Jaren Handy	Perry Central (New Augusta, MS)	DE	6-5	260
95.	Jacob Bandes	Pittsburg (Antioch, CA)	DT	6-2	275
96.	Joe Ngata	Folsom (Folsom, CA)	ATH	6-3	210
97.	Erick Young	Fort Bend Bush (Richmond, TX)	CB	6-1	195
98.	Xavier Truss	Bishop Hendrickson (Warwick, RI)	OT	6-7	325
99.	Enokk Vimahi	Kahuku (Kahuka, HI)	OT	6-5	290
100.	Jashawn Sheffield	Frederica Academy (Saint Simons Island, GA)	WR	6-1	178

2018 BOWL PROJECTIONS

ALAMO
Big 12 vs. Pac-12
West Virginia vs. USC

ARIZONA
Mountain West vs. Sun Belt
Colorado State vs. ULM

ARMED FORCES
American vs. Big 12
Houston vs. Kansas State

BAHAMAS
American vs. Conference USA
Memphis vs. FAU

BELK
ACC vs. SEC
Virginia Tech vs. Missouri

BIRMINGHAM
American vs. SEC
UCF vs. UCLA*

BOCA RATON
Conference USA vs. MAC
MTSU vs. Ohio

CACTUS
Big 12 vs. Pac-12
Iowa State vs. Utah

CAMELLIA
MAC vs. Sun Belt
Miami (Ohio) vs. Troy

CAMPING WORLD
ACC vs. Big 12
Florida State vs. Texas

CITRUS
ACC/Big Ten vs. SEC
Michigan State vs. Mississippi State

CURE
American vs. Sun Belt
Temple vs. Appalachian State

DOLLAR GENERAL
MAC vs. Sun Belt
Northern Illinois vs. Arkansas State

FAMOUS IDAHO POTATO
MAC vs. Mountain West
Buffalo vs. Fresno State

FOSTER FARMS
Big Ten vs. Pac-12
Northwestern vs. Oregon

FRISCO
American vs. MAC
Tulane vs. Toledo

GASPARILLA
American vs. TBD
USF vs. Army

HAWAII
Conference USA vs. Mountain West
Marshall vs. Utah State

HEART OF DALLAS
Big Ten vs. Conference USA
Minnesota vs. North Texas

HOLIDAY
Big Ten vs. Pac-12
Iowa vs. Stanford

INDEPENDENCE
ACC vs. SEC
Georgia Tech vs. Louisiana Tech*

LAS VEGAS
Mountain West vs. Pac-12
San Diego State vs. California

LIBERTY
Big 12 vs. SEC
Oklahoma State vs. Kentucky

MILITARY
American vs. ACC
Navy vs. Boston College

MUSIC CITY
ACC/Big Ten vs. SEC
Maryland vs. South Carolina

NEW MEXICO
Conference USA vs. Mountain West
Southern Miss vs. Wyoming

NEW ORLEANS
Conference USA vs. Sun Belt
UAB vs. Louisiana

OUTBACK
Big Ten vs. SEC
Purdue vs. Florida

PINSTRIPE
ACC vs. Big Ten
NC State vs. Nebraska

QUICK LANE
ACC vs. Big Ten
Wake Forest vs. Indiana

SUN
ACC vs. Pac-12
Louisville vs. Arizona

TAXSLAYER
ACC/Big Ten vs. SEC
Notre Dame vs. Texas A&M

TEXAS
Big 12 vs. SEC
TCU vs. LSU

New Year's Six

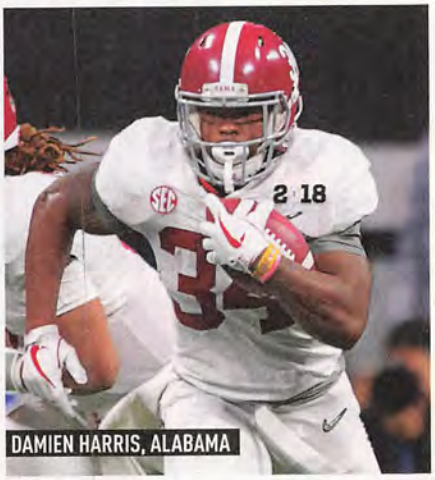
CHICK-FIL-A PEACH
At-Large vs. At-Large
Miami (Fla.) vs. Penn State

FIESTA
At-Large vs. At-Large
Boise State vs. Wisconsin

ROSE
Big Ten vs. Pac-12
Michigan vs. Washington

SUGAR
Big 12 vs. SEC
Oklahoma vs. Auburn

*According to our projections, the SEC will fail to fill its allotted slots.


DAMIEN HARRIS, ALABAMA

COLLEGE FOOTBALL PLAYOFF

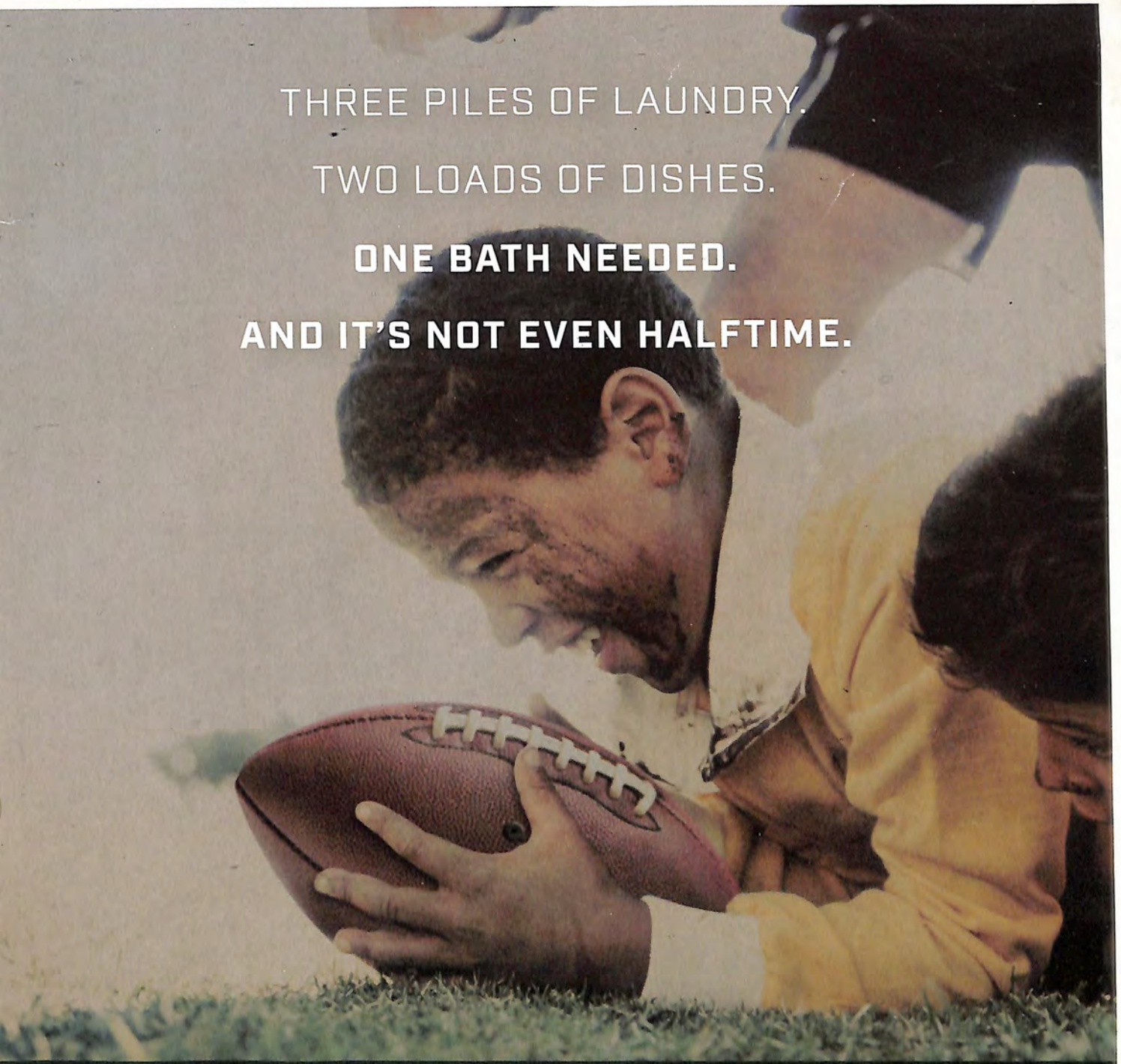
National Semifinal
COTTON BOWL
ALABAMA VS. OHIO STATE

National Semifinal
ORANGE BOWL
CLEMSON VS. GEORGIA

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP
Cotton Bowl winner vs. Orange Bowl winner
ALABAMA VS. CLEMSON


KELLY BRYANT, CLEMSON

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